



Ancient \* \* \*  
Records of \*  
Dumbarton and  
Glasgow \* \*





ANCIENT COLLEGE BOW AND "DROWNED LANDS" OF DUMBARTON, 1846.

Ancient Records  
of  
Dumbarton.

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*Compiled, Arranged, Elucidated, and in Part  
Written by*

**Donald MacLeod,**

Author of "The Castle and Town of Dumbarton," &c.

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*Illustrations by Hamilton J. MacMillan.*

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BENNETT & THOMSON, "HERALD" OFFICE.  
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**This Work**

IS DEDICATED BY ITS AUTHOR,  
WITH FEELINGS OF HIGH ESTEEM,  
TO

**Captain James D. Nisbet-Smollett, R.A.,**  
**LAIRD OF BONHILL,**

A WORTHY REPRESENTATIVE OF  
AN ANCIENT AND HONOURABLE DUMBARTON FAMILY,  
WHICH IN ITS TIME GAVE MANY  
MEN OF LIGHT, LEADING, AND VALOUR TO THAT BURGH,  
AND TO THE WORLD  
TOBIAS SMOLLETT OF IMMORTAL MEMORY.





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## Ancient Records of Dumbarton.

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(Author of "The Castle and Town of Dumbarton," &c.)

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### INTRODUCTION.

THE following glimpses of the Dumbarton of auld lang syne have been chiefly obtained through the medium of the Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs, and those of the Town Council of Dumbarton. The former were, with much painstaking, intelligent labour, transcribed from the original minute books and prepared for the press by Sir James D. Marwick, LL.D., Town Clerk of Glasgow, and were published over a series of years for the Convention of Royal Burghs by William Paterson, of Edinburgh, and fill five bulky tomes. I am indebted to the courtesy of Sir James for liberty to make extracts from these volumes. The latter were excerpted from the original sources by my deceased friend, Joseph Irving, F.S.A. Scot., author of the

“History of Dumbartonshire” and other works of an enduring nature, stamping him as one of the foremost county historians of his time. Mr Irving published the matter alluded to in a thin quarto volume when he resided and carried on business as a bookseller in the capital of the Lennox in the year of grace 1860.

The information drawn from these channels regarding the floods and fightings which afflicted the burgh of Dunbritton have been by me duly set forth in chronological order. Considerable additions to and elucidations on the text have been made, and it is fondly anticipated by the compiler that the resultant product of his not inconsiderable labours will be appreciated by his fellow townsmen, and by those beyond the walls of the old burgh who are connected therewith by birth or otherwise.

I will now allow an old Record to say a few words in its own quaint fashion to the modern Dumbartonians, whose lines have fallen in comparatively pleasant places, albeit they have been denuded of most of the goodly heritage which their forbears held for many centuries, but eventually frittered away so sadly in law pleaing, tavern haunting, and other questionable pastimes.

In illustration of the waste of the burgh funds in riotous living which went on freely through the instrumentality of the burgh officials in the old times, sometimes called good, I adduce the following account, which was found a few years ago in the quaint, tall, time-battered, yet staunch house at the Cross, built in 1623 by an Earl of Glencairn, who was an ancestor of R. B.

Cunninghame-Graham of Gartmore. The document alluded to was found in the attic of the house, among quite a pile of brown, frayed, dusty, centuries old, almost unreadable documents, which had evidently been stowed away there by a man, most likely a Colquhoun, who was at one and the same time a burgh and a county official, and at his demise were allowed to rest unmolested until tradesmen, in effecting certain repairs on the edifice a year or two ago, dragged them forth to the light of day from the dust in which they had lain entombed so long and quietly. The account is for liquors supplied to town's officials by a Mrs Buchanan. It may be said at this stage that these parties did not confine themselves to Mrs Buchanan's Change-House when on drinking bouts intent, for according to the burgh records they patronised by turns the houses of "Mistres" Calder, Mongw Buchanan, Mrs Colquhone, Mrs Lindsay, Alexr. M'Farlane, and Aulay M'Aulay. Mrs Buchanan's account runs as follows :—

Toun's Acompt Due to Mrs Buchanan.		£	s.	d.
1717.				
Item.	By Bailly Colquhoune & the Sheriff and oysr six bottles wyne half ane mut- kin brandy and two unces sugar.....	05	04	00
Octr. 12	By Bailly W. Bontin, Collin Gordoune and oysr. four makins ponsh, consist- ing of four chop. brandy, four chop. wyne and twenty four unces sugar....	09	12	00
	Said day for ane mutchkin old brandy & four unces sugar .....	00	15	00
	By By. Bontin & Drumikill and oysr two bottles wyne.....	01	12	00
	By By. Bontin & Captain of Artillery ane bottle wyne.....	00	16	00
	Summa	18	00	00

The above is a sample of large numbers of similar accounts which lie in the burgh archives, and shews plainly how the old town was milked by those in power.

The records of the Convention of Royal Burghs, from which I draw so freely, shew that all the Conventions, general and particular, between July, 1676 and 1692, both inclusive, were held in Edinburgh ; the general Conventions of 1657 and 1675 sat in Glasgow ; of the fifty-one general and particular Conventions recorded between 1625 and 1656, both inclusive, only one general Convention was held in Glasgow ; of the forty-two general and particular Conventions recorded between 1657 and 1675, both inclusive, twelve general and twenty-four particular Conventions were held in Edinburgh, two general Conventions had been convened in Glasgow, and one in each of the towns of Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, and Stirling, (a few of the earlier Conventions were held in Dumbarton.) With the exception of the general Conventions in July, 1692, and in 1697-8, 1703-4, which were held respectively in Dundee, Perth, Aberdeen, and twice successively in Glasgow, all the other Conventions and meetings of Committees of Convention between 1692 and 1704 were held in Edinburgh ; since 1704 the meetings have invariably taken place in that city, notwithstanding several attempts which had been made to get the Convention to revert to the old custom. Regarding the powers exercised by the Convention, to the records of which I am so much indebted—that body defined the rights, privileges, and duties of the Burghs ; it regulated the merchandise, manufactures, and shipping of



the country ; it exercised control over the Scottish merchants in France, Flanders, and other countries in Europe, with which from time to time commercial relations existed ; it sent commissioners to foreign powers, and to great commercial communities, entered into treaties with them, and established the staple trade of Scotland wherever this could be most advantageously done ; it claimed the right, independently of the Crown, to nominate the Conservator who watched over the interests of Scottish merchants in the Netherlands, &c. ; and it certainly did regulate his emoluments and control his conduct ; it sometimes defrayed and sometimes contributed towards the expenses of ambassadors from the Scottish Court to that of France, and other foreign Powers, in matters affecting the Burghs and the common weal ; it allocated among the whole Burghs of the kingdom their proportions of all extents and taxes granted by the three Estates of the realm ; it adjudicated on the claims of the Burghs to be admitted to the privileges of free Burghs, and to be added to its roll ; it took cognizance of weights and measures ; it submitted propositions to Parliament in regard to all matters affecting the interests of the country, and influenced to an incalculable extent the national legislation. In a word, it formed a complete and powerful organisation for the protection of burgal rights and privileges, and for the promotion of whatever the Burghs conceived to be for their own interest and that of the country generally. Its records thus contain much that throws light on every department of Scottish history. Were a

modified system of Home Rule inaugurated in North Britain to take into consideration railway, gas, water, and other bills of a similar nature affecting that portion of the kingdom and it only, then, to my thinking, the proper body to investigate and report to the Imperial Parliament anent the feasibility of the various schemes would be the ancient and honourable Court of the Convention of Royal Burghs, which has for so many centuries been closely identified with the regulation of the municipal affairs of the Kingdom of Scotland, and left its impress on them for good. Appended is a summons for the burgh officials of this town to send a representative to the Convention of 1685. This most interesting, beautifully written document is in good preservation, and was found a few years ago in "Glencairn's greit house" at the Cross of Dumbarton. The postage of the missive from the metropolis to this place was two shilling stg.

For

The Right honorable  
The Provost the Bailies and Councillors of the  
burgh of Dumbarton,

Right honorable—

I hope you are not ignorant that by his Majesty's royall proclamation King James the 7th (who now reigneth), of date 20th day of february instant, our new Parliament is to sitt at Edinburgh upon the ninth day of April next, and as the usuall custom is that the Royal Burrows are to meett eight days before the down sitting of the parliament to give consideration to those matters which concern them which may be brought before the Parliament, I therefore thought fitt by advise of the Commissioners of Edinr. to give you tymous advertisement to send your Comisenor sufficiently instructed to the effect foresaid, to meett heir at Edinr. on the second day of April next At (which) yoo tender the weel fare of the state of Burrow And bids you farewell And Rest

Right honorable  
Your Affectionate freend and servand

GEORGE DRUMMOND, Provost

Edinburgh ye 20th. day of february  
1685



## Section I.

### DUMBARTON'S WARRINGS WITH THE WATERS OF LEVEN AND CLYDE.

The first minute, which I transcribe from the Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs, shews Dumbarton in the guise of a humble suppliant.

#### DUMBARTON CRAVES SUPPORT.

In 1582 the Burgh of Dumbarton approached the Convention of Royal Burghs for support in its battlings with the waters of Leven and Clyde with the following result:—"Anent the supplication gevin in to thame be the Commissioner of Dumbartan, they continew the answer geving thereto unto their nixtt Conventioun beis haldin to remember burrowis heirop in thair missives, and to desyre their Commissioneris to cum fullie instructed quhatt support they will mak the said Burgh of Dumbarton for repairing of thair deokayitt hawin (possession) and stopping of the watter thairrof." At the subsequent meeting (1583) the consideration of the matter was once more postponed to the next meeting of Convention, which was to be held at Linlithgow, and at it no deliverance was given on the subject, but to somewhat facilitate the matter the following minute was framed

thereat :—“ Anent the supplicationis gevin in be the burrowis of North-beruick, Dunbartane, and Renfrow, craiveing support of the burrowis to the reparatioun of thair townes respective, continews answer geving to the nixt Conventioun of burrowis, quhairas thay ordane ilk burgh to send their Commissioneris fully instructid to that effect, and this to be rememberit in the missives, etc. And forther findis expedientt that ane article be gevin in to the nixt Parliament, craiveing support of the hail realme to the decayitt burrowis ”

At Glasgow in 1598 the giving of help to Dumbarton was still under the consideration of the Convention, and was once more staved off, as the accompanying extract from their minutes will testify :—“ Ordanis ilk brugh to cum sufficientle instructit to the nixt Conventioun to ansuer to the supplicatioun of Dumbartane for keiping of their toun and herberie fra wesching away be the sey and watter—and the Commissioneris of Edinbrugh, Dundy, and Aberdein, and sic vtheris as pleissis, to pas and vyse the estait of Dumbartane and mak report in the nixt Conventioun, and this to be ane heid of the missive.”

**IMPOST GRANTED TO THE TOWN TO PREVENT  
ITS DESTRUCTION.**

The Convention of 1600 was held at Edinburgh, and at it the following important business was transacted, which after the lapse of eighteen years of irksome delay put matters in such train as would in the working out do some little to mitigate the hard fate of the Dumbartonians, who were assailed from the north and south by

the rivers Leven and Clyde, which had in the past centuries been to them very good friends and veritable waters of life, but were now, under altered circumstances, threatening their existence as a community, and seemed as if they would become to them waters of death. This is the deliverance alluded to above :—“The Commissioneris of burrowis presentle conwenit grantis and gewis licence to the brugh of Dumbartane to impetrat of our souerane lord ane gift of the impost following, for the space of sewin yearis, to be imployit for preservation of the said brugh fra innundatioun and destructioun be the riweris about the samyn, that is to say : of ilk kow, hors, ox, stott, meir, and staig (young horse) that cumis within thair liberte and fredome, and passis throw the samyn, to quhatsumewer numberis, be the awneris, carrieris, or dryweris thairof, to pay to the said brugh for ilk ane thairof aucht penneis ; item of ilk merchand cumand to the twa seurall fairis within the said brugh, the ane the first day of August callit Lambes fair, and the second being upon the sewintene day of Merch quhilk is callit Patrikmes fair, that keipes buith within the said brugh, tua shillingis sex penneis ; item of ilk claythman, snythis and otheris standing upon the common calsayis of the said brugh, haifing geir to sell, twelf penneis ; item ilk cramer (hawker of goods) standing upon the said calsay, sex penneis ; item of ilk boitt that hes tymer or barkis passing throw thair riwer to ony merkettis or to the merkettis within the said brugh, that thai sall pay at ilk tyme thre s. iiijd. ; item of ilk bow of bark sauld in the said merkett, sex peneis :

item of ilk schip, bark and crear (a kind of lighter), cummand from ony forane partis, or from the ileis, within the libertie of the said brugh, at ilk tyme, the schip being aboue fiftie twn xiijs. iiijd., the bark being aboue twenty twn vjs. viijd., the creyar being aboue fyve twn thre s. iiijd. ; and that to be payit be the awneris or maisters of the saidis schippes, barkis, and creyaris, quhairof the guidis to pay tua pairt and the veshell the third ; ilk kowpar boit of hering anis in the yeir iijs. iiijd. (boat owned by a buyer and seller of herring, not by by a fisher thereof), prouyding awayis that the said brugh bestow the said impost for preseruand of the samyn in maner foirsaid, and mak compt to the burrowis at expyreing of thair said licence, vnder the pane of xx. li. sa oft as thai failze, to be payit to the burrowis ; and the Commissioner of Glasgow dissentit heirto and thairupon askit instrumentis."

In 1606 the Convention, held at Dundee in consideration, doubtless, of the great and possibly increasing straits that the people of Dumbarton were in, "Grants and gewis licence to the brugh to impetrat (beseech) of our souerane lord ane gift of ane impost and custome for the space of nynteine yeiris efter the date thairof in maner and conforme to the licence grantit to the said brugh be the burrowis at their Conventioun haldin at (Linlithgow, 1584)," as narrated above.

In 1603 the Haddington Convention, we find, "ordanis James Wynrame agent to gif to Thomas Fallisdaill, Commissioner for Dumbar-tane, the soume of auchtene pundis, to be



bestowit be thair said brugh for reperaturioun of thair herbere, and the samyn sall be allowit to him in his comptis."

LICENSE GRANTED TO SETT THE COMMON MUIR,  
&c., IN FEU OR LONG TACKS.

At the particular Convention held in Edinburgh in 1603, on 8th July, important powers were given to the municipal rulers of Dumbarton, so as to put them in a better position to prevent the ruin of their town, which seemed so imminent if not strenuously averted by energetic action on their part :—"The samyn day, haiffing red and considerit the haill artickileis productit be Thomas Fallisdail, Commisioner for the brugh of Dumbartane, and speciale that artickle desyring licence of the burrowis to set in few or lang takis thair wyld and comon mure, lyand aucht myle distant fra thair brugh, na wayis profitable to them nor the inhabitants thair of, and that to quhat sumeuir persouns quha will bid maist thairfoire, dispensand with thair actis of burrowis, and speciale the act maid at Kinghorne, ordaneing the said brugh to sett the samyn onle to the burgessis of thair awin brugh, and to na otheris ; and thatt in respect of thair grit necessitte and wantt of commoun guid to the reparatioun of thair brugh, quhilk of lait is lyk to be cutit away be the watter of Lewin, and and for bying in again of thair pitte customeis to them selffis, quhilk of auld hes bene sauld be thair predecessouris : the saidis Commissioneris, efter ressoning and consideratioun haid be thame of the appearand decay of the said brugh, grantis and geivis licence to the said brugh of

Dumbartane to sett in few or lang tackis thair said commoun mure to sic as biddis maist thairfoire efter lauchfull rooping thairoff, prowyding awayis that at the said rowpping and setting of the samyn in few or tak thay obtene the consent of the provest, baillies, counsall, and communitie of the said brugh, or maist pairt of them, as lykwayis resseruand to the said brugh and to the use of the inhabitantis thairof ane myle nerrest themselfis betwixt and Auchtinreoch, togidder with peitis, turff, hedder, querell (quarry), and hie gaittis (highways) vsit and wont, and that the said brugh tak securitie be infestment of the few duty gotten thairfoir within thair brugh and terrotorie thairoff, dispensand with the actis of burrowis, maid of before and speciale the act maid at Kinghorne in anno 1600, and agreis that thay sett thair mylneis to the wtter awaill (utmost avail) be few or lang takis. (Signed)

JOHNE ROBERTSONE, for Edinbrugh.

ALEXANDER JAFFRAY, for Aberdene.

ALEXR. LOKHART, for Ayre.

ARCHIBALD TAILFEIR, for Wigton.

J. ANDERSONE, Commissioner for Cowper.

DAVID WATSOUNE, for Sanctandros.

THOMAS FALLUSDAILL, for Dumbartane.

THOMAS PETTEGREW, for Glasgow.

THE KING COMES TO THE RESCUE OF THE BURGH  
IN ITS TIME OF NEED.

As is indicated in a foregoing minute, King James VI. was supplicated to lend his potent aid to Dumbarton in its extremity, caused by the encroachment of the waters of Leven and Clyde,

and they besought him not in vain. The Parliament which met in 1607 empowered the burgh to levy various petty dues upon vessels entering the Clyde and Leven ; and authorised a tax of 25,000 merks, Scots money, to be levied upon the kingdom for the purpose of repairing the decayed bulwarks erected against the inroads of the waters. During the time that this assessment was being gathered, King James made an additional grant of 12,000 merks Scots, "to be paid out of the readiest of the revenues," and exempted the inhabitants from all attendance upon the expedition which was summoned to meet at Isla on the 1st of June for the purpose of proceeding against the refractory island chiefs.

The King, addressing the Privy Council, writes:—"Richt traist and weil-beloved cousings and counsillars, we greitt you heartlie weill. Wheras the apparent and imminent decay of our burgh of Dunbartane, by the inundatioun of waters, quhilk by tyme ar lyke to carrey away the hail toun, moved the estaites of that our kingdom to condescend to a volunter subsydie of twenty-five thousand merks for building up such fortificationes against the violent ris of the water as nicht preserve that our burgh frae ony farder harme thairby ; and in regard that sic soum was too little for doing of the work intendit, thairfor we have given our speciall precept for payment of twelve thousand merks mair, sae that our old burgh, of sae lang continuance, suld not perish for laik of supplie. And because the work itself will hold no doubt the sole inhabitants of the same busey indureing

the time thair of, and speciall ye this sumer now approaching ; and we being loathe that upon ony other occasion they suld be diverted from doing of that quhilk will admitt of no delay ; we have thairfor thocht meit to exeime thaim from all burdeyne of this jurney intendit for quyeting of our isles, since thair povertye cannot yield any greit matter of help in that busyiness ; and that the going thither of ony of thaim wald be a hinderance of thair ane workes ; and ye sall speciall ye license thaim from the obedience of our proclamacionis made for their repairing to the said isles, and no way sufer thaim to be troublit or molested for the same in case of their absence thair frae. Whereanent these presents sall be your warrant, and so we bid your fairweel.

JAMES R.

Frae our Court at Thetforde,  
the xv. daie of Aprill, 1608.

**COMMISSIONERS OF BURGHS TO SUPERINTEND  
WATER WORKS, AND GIVE REPORTS.**

At Selkirk in 1608, on 7th July, the Convention gave this deliverance :—The samyn day, haifing red and considerit the Act of Parliament maid anent the taxatioun of xxv thousand merkis grantit to the brugh of Dumbartane for preseruatioun of the samyn fra inundatioun of the watter of Lewin, to the quhilk soume Thomas Fallisdail and John Semple of Correich, burgessis of the said brugh, ar constitut collectoris ; lyk as also powir and commissioun is gevin be wirtew of the said act to the Commissionaris of the haill burrowis of this realm be them selfis or sic vtheris as thai sall depute to

sie the wark for saiftie of the said brugh proceed and tak effect, and to by, prōwyd, and furneis materiallis, conduce the warkmen and all vther personnis meitt for perfyteing of the said wark, and to cheis the maisteris of wark and owirsears quha sall have credeit in deburssing of the soumeis of money to be bestowit thairvpoun, and sall be comptable to the saidis burrowis for the samyn ; lyk as the saidis estaitis decernis and ordanis the saidis tua collectors to mak compt and reckning of the haille ressait and debursement to the Commissioneris of burrowis at thair generall Conventioun, as the said Act of Parliament daitit at Edinbrugh the xj day of August, 1607, purportis ; the saidis Commissioneris of burrowis, for obedience of the said Act of Parliament, and for advanceing necessar and godle (goodly) wark, gewis powir and commissioun to the brughis of Edinbrugh, Glasgow, Sterling, Air, Irewin, to elect and deput sic persounis of thair brugh as ar maist meitt and qualifeit to meitt and conveyne at the said brugh of Dumbartane the xvj day of August nixt, and and all vther tymeis neidfull, to the nixt Conventioun of burrowis, and to conforme to the said Act of Parliament to sie the said wark proceed and tak effect, with powir to cheis the maister of wark and owersearis, and to allow and disalow of them thatt ar enterit thairto alreddy, and to do all thingis for setting forward the said wark that the saidis burrowis might do themselfis be wertew of the said Act of Parliament, and to mak reporte to the saidis burrowis at thair nixt generall conventioun of thair proceedingis ; and ordanit the present Commis-

sionaries of the saidis fyve burrowis to mak intimatioun to their saidis brughis, at their returne off this present Act, and ordenance and assist with them for effectuating thairof. And becaus the said Thomas Fallisdill and John Semple ar alreddy enterit to the said wark, coft materiallis as thai declairit, and ressaut ane pairt of the said taxatioun; thairfoir the saidis Commissioneris ordanis them, being personally present, to concur with the deputis of the saidis burrowis to be rewlit be them and follow thair adwyse in all thingis concerning the said wark; as alsua ordanis the saidis tua collectoris of thair awin consentis to compear before the Commissioneris of burrowis in the nixt generall conventioun, quhairever the samyn sall be hald, without ony forder citatioun, and thair, for exoneratioun of the saidis burrowis, to giff in vnto them ane perfyte compt in writt of thair ressaitis and debursementis of all soumeis of money intrometit, or that it sal happin them to intromet, with thatt is or salbe destenet to the said wark, and of thair delegens to inbring the samyn; lyk as the said Thomas Fallisdail and John Semple of Correch, collectoris foirsaidis, of thair awin fre will, vncompellit or coactit, be thir presentis bindis and oblissis them selffis, conjunctle and severalle, thair airis, executoris, and successoris quhat sumeivir, that thai sall do thair dewty in collecting the said taxatioun of xxv<sup>m</sup> merkis and all vther soumes that may be gottin to the said wark, and mak compt to the said burrowis of the samyn, and lykwayis for applying of the foirsaid soume, and forder as his mgeste sall bestow vpoun the said



wark, conforme to the said Act of Parliament, be adwyse of the saidis burrowis, efter the forme and tenour of the Act of burrowis maid at Edinbrugh the xj day of August, 1607, in all pointis ; and the saidis Commissioneris ordanis the expenssis of the deputis of saidis fyve brughis quha hes the cair of the said wark in maner foirsaid to be vpoun the expenssis of the said taxatioun and soumeis grantit to the said wark, and the said tua collectouris to deburse the samyn, whilk sall be allowit to them in thair comptis.

**IMPERFECT ACCOUNTS PRESENTED BY DUMBAR-  
TON TO THE CONVENTION.**

Cupar, 6th July, 1609.—At a meeting of Convention “the quhilk day, the saidis Commissioneris being convenit anent the mater of the taxatioun of Dumbartane, concerning the heiring and futeing of thair comptis of the soumeis alreddy deburssit vpoun the wark, mentionat in the generall missive and act of the last Conventioun : efter conference with Thomas Fallisdail and ressoning with him thairanent, findis the comptis presentit be him to be verray imperfyte, seing thai war in scrollis and nocht in ane buik, and thairfoire ordanis the said Thomas for him selffe, and taking the burding vpoun him for John Semple his colleg, to bring and produce in mair perfyte forme thair saidis comptis quhilk thai sould have producit at this Conventioun to the Counsale of Edinbrugh betwixt and the first day Nouember, to be sichtit, correctit, and examenit be the said brugh, and the said brugh of Edinbrugh to mak reporte thair of to the nixt Conventioun, and this to be ane heid of the

nixt missive, and the saidis Thomas Fallisdaill and John Semple to be present at the nixt Conventioun with thair saidis comptis.”

In 1610, at the Convention held in Crail, John Semple and Thomas Fallisdaill produced and lodged statements of income and expenditure in regard to the water work, which were ordained to remain in the hands of the clerk to be “tryit and controllit,” and ordained them to give in a particular account every Saturday night of their whole disbursements upon materials and workmen’s wages to five persons named in the minute, or any three of them, and, further, that they were to make no purchases of timber or other materials for the work without the consent of those appointed to act in conjunction with them, who were also to be consenting parties to the hiring of workmen, and in all things connected with the carrying on of the work. As a further safeguard, the accounts which would fall to be submitted to the next general assembly would require to be signed by the five nominees of the Convention, or a majority of same, before they would be considered sufficient, “and the saidis personis chairgit with the payment of thair hail introumission; quhilk act was presentlie read to the said Johne and Thomas, quha consentit thairto, and was ordenit to tak ane extract thair of for thair better informatione.”

In 1611, at the Stirling meeting, an account of introumissions concerning the water works was given in, and not being considered satisfactory, it was ordered that the hearing and “fitting” of all the bygone accounts be continued to the next general convention, and ordained the collectors

then to lodge an account of their further disbursements and receipts. At this decision John Semple waxed wroth, and demanded that the accounts be examined forthwith, and said that if that they would not do, then he would have no more to do with the matter. The present Commissioner for Dumbarton protested “in the contrair in respect of his introussione and the comptis not endit, lyk as the burrowes refusis his renunciatioune and ordeans him to proceed in the said wark vpoun his awin perrell, as he will be ansuerable to the King’s Majestie and burrowis.”

In 1612, at Aberbrothock, it was resolved “to tak ordour with the compts of the burgh of Dumbartane concerning the taxatiouns, imposts, and the King’s Majesty his gift granted to thame of the impoyment thairof, and Thomas Fallisdail and Johne Sempell be warnit to that effect, and to allow and disallow the said compts, or to continow the samin to the nixt generall Conventioun, as thay sall think expedient.

At the particular Convention of Royal Burghs held in Edinburgh, August, 1612, doubts about the genuiness of the returns received from Dumbarton still prevailed, and a Commission consisting of six Commissioners, two or either of them for each of the burghs of Glasgow, Ayr, and Stirling, was appointed to visit Dumbarton some day this month to examine and report upon all matters relating to the water works.

At Dunbar in 1613, July 9th, “anent the matter of the compts of the burgh of Dumbartane of the taxatioune grantit to thame be the estaits in Parliament, the Commissionar of the said burgh

and John Simpell and Thomas Fallisdaill being present, the saids Commissioners, at command of our soveran lord's letters direct at the instance of lords Thesaurer and Advocat be delyverance of the Lords of Exchaker, continwis the hering and allowing of the saids compts unto the tyme the samyne be productit before the saids lords."

At Kirkcaldy, on 8th July, 1614, the Convention "ordeins James Winrahame, thair agent, to caus call the letters anent the compts of Dumbartane, and to get thame remittit bak again to the burrowes, conforme to the Act of Parliament, vpon the expenses allwayes of Johne Semple and Thomas Fallisdaill, collectors of the taxatione, alanerlie (only) and the expenses to be debursit thairvpon to be allowit to thame in thair compts, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missive."

At St Andrews, on 7th July, 1615, the Commissioners, having considered the accounts of Dumbarton for the sums granted for work at the water of Leven, referred to in the 21st Act of the general Convention of 1612, the 58th of 1613, and the 42nd of 1614, with the report of the auditors, ratified and approved of the same, and "finds the saids compters as yit superexpendit in the soum of £3101 2s 4d." The receipts include the sum of 12,000 merks "resavit by his Majestie's speciall directione from his Hienes reseavers in this kingdome in recompense of thair super expenses."

The Commissioners, at the meeting held in Glasgow in 1625, were informed that John Semple and Thomas Fallisdaill, collectors of the taxation, had not employed a certain part of same

for reparation of the water works of Dumbarton, but used it for other purposes. They therefore enjoined the Commissioner for Dumbarton, who was present, that he should present the persons named to the Convention at their next general meeting, to make count and reckoning, and payment of the sum intromitted with by them, under the pain of one hundred pounds.

The foregoing exhausts all that is contained in the published records of the Convention of Royal Burghs anent Dumbarton's warrings with the waves, so that to still further explicate the matter I give excerpts from the Council Records of the burgh of Dumbarton, and elucidations and reminiscences of my own, on the subject of the

“DROWNED LANDS.”

On 19th July, 1608, the magistrates and councillors of the burgh arranged, “on the advise of Merchiston,” to cast anew the old Bishop's watter gang for carrying off the water of Leven, and enjoin all persons in the town to assist under a penalty of V. lib.” The Duke of Lennox, as proprietor of the Mains of Cardross, and Sir William Stewart as life-renter thereof, opposed the carrying out of the scheme, upon the plea that the cast went through their property. The Bishop who at first cast the water gang alluded to, is supposed to have been the Bishop of Orkney, a member of the Lennox family.

As the lands encroached upon by the Leven were in 1609 granted to the community by King James VI., his charter of confirmation in a

minutely detailed way gives the situation and boundaries thereof, enabling us at this present time to form a pretty correct estimate as to their extent, and the measure of loss which would be entailed upon the burgh were the serious inroads of the water of Leven to go on unchecked.

The drowned lands, as they are called in the charter, were, as gifted to the town, bounded by a line beginning at the north-west end of the burgh at the Common Vennel, which led to the river through the property now owned by Messrs Denny & Co., engineers and boilermakers. How it got into private hands is explained by this excerpt from the Town Council records of Dumbarton of date May 22, 1792 :—“The Lane or Loan running from the High Street to the river Leven, near Sky Bank, agreed to be exchanged for an addition to be made to the breadth of one adjoining Dougald M'Callum's property (north of the bridge), on the condition that the Glasswork Company, with whom the exchange is made, shall erect a stone at the foot of the Sky Bank Lane, with an inscription declaring it to be the commencement and termination of the Town's Commony, as described in the charter granted to the burgh by King James Sixth. From enquiries which I have made, it does not appear that the reasonable and proper stipulation made by the authorities was ever implemented by the Glasswork Company.

From the common loan which passed from the High Street through the water of Leven as it then ran—(its line of running appears to have been a somewhat erratic one in the days of old. One of its vagaries may here be noticed : The



lands of Upper Cordale, a portion of the Strathleven estate upon which stand Cordale Printworks—Wm. Stirling & Sons—were at one time on the east or Dumbarton side of the river, and the owner or owners of same paid, and still pay, tiends to the parish minister of Dumbar ton)—the lands stretched northward by the bulwark to be made to the south end of the Bishop's Cast, then on to the Town's Ross, rounding by the Water Brae to the end of the north bulwark, and the land known as Cunying Park ; the continuation being eastward by the Water Brae, between the Ross on the east side and Cunying Park on the west ; thence along the goit (trench) by the east side of the Mill Ross Meadow to the High Street ; then south and south-east the High Street towards the edge of the lands of Guisholm—(would the High Street be the highway which of old connected Dumbarton, *via* the Broadmeadow, Gate-side, and Bonhill, with Stirling ? the description favours that idea)—and onward to the water gang and mill lade (which passed Dhuholm, Bonhill Road) of the Common Mill (in the town-end district, near the Common) ; from thence the boundary line extended along the water to the Townend, then round about the water bank and Braehead to the old College Kirk, and therefrom westward to the Bankend (the southern end of the embankment), and the Waterbrae to the Vennel, where the line began. (A good portion of the meadow to the south must have been washed away, for its southern termination now lies a considerable distance northward of its old line.)

The extracts which immediately follow show forth in a very lucid, succinct manner that the many attempts which were made by the inhabitants to protect from the ravages of the waters their town and territory were not crowned with any great measure of success, for ever and anon the assailing floods played havoc with them, to the great grief and loss of the community, whose time was so much taken up in those defensive operations that they had very little to spare for the furtherance of their own individual interests. It is not to be wondered at that under these circumstances their burgh became, and long continued to be, "a pair deckayitt place," wherein few men dwelt, and these mostly very poor. The only building of this period remaining is "Glencairn's Greit House" at the Cross.

While the Broadmeadow and the northern portions of the town were being badly mauled by the Leven, the southern part of the burgh was rudely assaulted by the Clyde, and the land from the Castle up the Leven to near the centre of the burgh was protected by embankments from its malignant attacks. The last of these defences was obliterated in 1867, when the Leven Shipyard was originally formed on a comparatively small scale.

#### WATER WORK IN DANGER.

On June 23rd, 1634, "The vissitors report, they faund the wattir wark in grit danger of undermyning and breking through, gif it be not preventit, and lykwayis, that thay find that the wattir of Leven above the hail bulwark is weirin in sa far by the bulwarks, that gif it war



GLENCAIRN'S "GREIT HOUSE" AT CROSS.



to gang, to their opinion, fourtie feet farder, it will be unrecoverabill. Thairfoire they think guid that the Proveist speik or writ to Johne Stewart in Beith, maister of wark thair, to cum and vissit the saime, and gif his opinion how it sall be preventit, for the quhilk he is to be satisfit be the toun out of the moneys dew to the said wark. And for the bulwarks beneth, ordain the saime to be repairit with diligence with fail (divots) and staines, and ordain Thomas Fallisdaell to be maister of wark. And requestes the Proveist to speik the men of the Kerss (most likely Carss of Stirling) quha biggis dyks thair, to cum heir, and agree with twa, thrie, or four of them as he best can."

#### THE LEVEN STILL A SOURCE OF TROUBLE.

On April 22, 1683, the Council of the burgh came to this conclusion at their meeting :—"The water warks to be repaired. The wark at the middle of the Broad Meadow forgainst the stream and owre out of the river is much fallen doune ; the south end of the Broad Meadow (which length the wark did not run) is so worne away by the river that the very channel is worne in beneath the brae (on which the Collegiate Church of St Mary stood), and a bark sunken up upone the west syde, quhilk has casten the wholeriver over to the east syde, and if remeid be not instantly fund it wid very soon be in upon the Kills at the toun heid. John Colquhoun, maister of wark, is to make ane dussan of greit creills and to cause fill the same with stones, and fix the same down in the river forgainst that pairt of the Broad Meadow quhair the current has made ane

new course, and otherwyse to repair the same the best way that can be."

In 1704. At the Convention of Royal Burghs, held in Glasgow, the fact was laid before the meeting that in spite of all that had been done in the past, the works erected to secure or protect the burgh of Dumbarton from the inroads of the waters, were again in a bad state and demanded instant attention, and the local authorities solicited aid to help them to battle with the assailing waters. Nor sought they assistance in vain, as witness the following excerpt:—  
 "Allowed to the burgh of Dumbarton £50 sterling, to be employit by them towards the reparation of ther water works, which are now much decayed."

#### WAGES OF MEN AND WOMEN ENGAGED AT THE WATER WORKS.

The burgh records of Dumbarton of date July 1st, 1628, throw light upon the scale of remuneration given to the male and female workers at the reparation of the water works. The minute goes on to state that "It is concludit that the watter wark be helpit, and that there be twa heids maid, and that workmen begin to mak for the samyn heids of tymer, and wark at the same wark on Monday nixt, the 7 of this instant, and hes chosen Thomas Fallasdaill overseir of the said wark, and ordanis that ilk man sall have for ane dayis wark ffyve s. and ilk woman foir s. money. (Scots, 5d and 4d sterling respectively.)

#### WATER GANG TO BE CAST.

On July 18th, 1628, "The quhilk day, thay proveist, magistrattis, and committie, have

concludit, be the advyse of the Counsall and Committie, that the town sall cast a watter gang on the south side of the watter of Leven for saftie of the town, to convey the watter aff the Cuny Park and heid of the upper warks, and to begin on Monday nixt at the low watter, and that the town be devydit in halffis, and the east end of the town till the Cross and east side of the Cross Vennall, with speddis and schoolis, to begin the first day, and the west end of the town and Townend, and west side of the Cross Vennall the nixt day, and sua on. Because Thomas Fallasdail, maister of warks, and uthers quha visit the wark, hes thot it absolutlie necessar the said cast be coussin. And quhaevir beis absent sall paye a dayes waiges as unlaw for ilk tyme they be absent, being waruit."

#### THE LAIRD OF LUSS TO VISIT THE WATER WORKS.

On September 19th, 1628, the magistrates and Council transacted the following business : "The quhilk day, they think meit that the laird of Luss be desirit to visit the watter warks, as my Lord Ross did, and to report down his opinions thaireanent, and to that effect desyre Thomas Fallisdail to go to him, gif he be cum hame ; and the same be gotten, concluids that the report be sent to the lords of secret Counsall to thair nixt Counsall day, viz., the 24th of this instant, and voittis David Watsoun to go for that effect, quha refusit the same because of his advyses (deliberations so as to give judgment) in the Duke of Lenox and his bailaries affaires, quharin he is ingadget presentlie, and sua affirmit he could not go (albeit he is veri willing).



**DEBTORS TO WATER WORKS TO BE IMPRISONED.**

On July 20th, 1629, the Town Council resolved "The quhilk day it is concludit that the hail personnis awand moneyie belonging to the watter work be chargit in ward within the tolbuith, thairin to remain till they pay the same to be imployit to the watter wark. And in the meantyme ordane the wark to be vissyit be the Magistratts and Counsall this present daye. And according to the necessitie to be helpit, and to begin thairto the morne, and nominates Thomas Fallisdail master of wark for this year."

I would now say a few words elucidatory of the subject under review.

The Broad Meadow, gifted by King James VI. of Scotland to the burgh of Dumbarton, appears (to judge by a map of date 1654 and by one of the preceding excerpts from the Council Records) to have been at that time cut off from the adjacent land to the east. That, in all probability, was brought about by the channel of the Leven at an abrupt bend near the Mains of Cardross having become silted up by the gravel and sand which had for centuries been borne from Lochlomond and found a resting place there, ultimately preventing the free flow of the river in its accustomed course, causing the waters thereof during a heavy spate when they were dammed back by an exceptionally high wind and tide—to scoop out a new channel through the alluvial soil at the north end of the Meadow, and rush madly onwards partly in the bed of the College Burn, past Gooseholm, Braehead, the old College Bow, and the Bankend,

leaving its new course and debouching into its old one where Denny & Co.'s engine works now stand, and from thence sweep on in its way to the Clyde in its wonted fashion.

As has been seen in the foregoing part of this work the Dumbartonians were for centuries ever and anon engaged in the arduous task of making the river to again run in its old channel and in it alone, which they ultimately in some measure accomplished. But during my lifetime the Leven not seldom has broken down its barriers in what is now as in the past its vulnerable part at the north end of the Common during tempestuous weather when in flood, and converted the Broad Meadow for the nonce into a lake, holding high jinks over the ample expanse from which it had been in some degree excluded by centuries of labour. The crowning achievement in connection with the protection of the Broad Meadow from the encroachments of the rivers Leven and Clyde was made in 1859, when an earthen embankment was built round it. The money for same was furnished by the Caledonian and Dumbartonshire Railway Company in payment for burgh property taken by them in connection with the formation of their line. Their Act of Parliament contained a stipulation that the price paid should be applied to that purpose and to that only. For many years before 1859 the tides twice a day covered the major portion of the Common, when the higher parts thereof appeared as green islets in a silver setting, upon which the cows of the burgesses clustered to calmly chew the cud, and patiently wait until the waters abated and

gave them freedom to wander about at their own will.

In the early thirties the regattas of the burgh were pulled round the Common at high water emerging into the Leven by a gap at its northern extremity where the old time embankment had given way, and from thence made their homeward run down the river to their starting place at the College Bow.

In my boyhood it was the common belief as it still is, but possibly in a lesser degree, that a considerable portion of the Dumbarton of old had stood on the "drowned lands." One day when wading in the pellucid waters of the College Burn along with sundry schoolmates in quest of flounders, which we captured by our bare feet as the fish lay sunning themselves on the beautiful sandy bed of the burn, one of my chums shouted lustily out, "Come here quick, you chaps; as sure's death my leg's gane doon a lum o' yin o' the auld sunk hooses." It consists with tradition and in some degree with history that in far-back centuries houses at intervals extended from the head of the Cross Vennel to the Townend, which were swallowed up by the inrush of waters at the great inundation, the memory of which disaster still lives in the minds of the people as a striking example of the mutability of all things terrene.

In a long letter, of date Chelsea, March 9, 1756, written by Tobias Smollett, now without address, but most likely sent to his cousin James, of Bonhill, full of surmises in regard to the origin of their name and of antiquarian matter relating to Dumbarton, this paragraph occurs—"The greater part of Dumbarton has

been destroyed by an inundation. I myself, when a boy, have felt the stones of the pavement under water between what is called the College and the Town's End. I think I remember to have seen the ruins of old stone houses on the other side of the Sands." The older portion of my readers will remember the spot on the Broadmeadow where the Sands cattle fair was held, on the east side of the sandy margins of the water, nigh to where the golf club house now stands. With its tents for dispensing liquors, its sweetie stands, its congregation of gangrel bodies intent on amusing or defrauding the lieges, and the large muster of cattle, and of people interested in the selling and buying of the same, the Common for the nonce assumed a lively aspect.

The following spirited lines from the well-practised pen of our local poetess, Mrs Hartley, gives a vivid description of the catastrophe which laid low a portion of the old town of Dumbarton. The poem, which was published thirty years ago, is titled

#### THE ANCIENT COLLEGE BOW.

THIS time-worn arch, in dreams again  
I seem to see it stand,  
Ere rooted from its ancient place  
By traffic's iron hand.

I see the gowans white once more,  
O'erspread the grassy brae—  
Where in the sunny days of spring  
The children used to play.

All yellow with its golden whins,  
I see the meadow green,  
And with its waters clear and bright,  
The Leven flows between ;

Whilst overhead the lofty trees  
Their waving shadows throw,  
And spread their giant arms around  
The ancient College Bow.

Here with my young companions oft  
I've wandered hand-in-hand,  
And castles built, in childish glee,  
Among the golden sand.

And in the sunny summer time  
We gather'd daisies there,  
And link'd them into flowery chains  
Around our necks to wear.

And with my childhood's kindest friend  
How oft I've left my home—  
The friend who watch'd my infant steps,  
And taught them first to roam.

And hand-in-hand along the brae  
All gleeful we would go ;  
O earliest memories twine around  
The ancient College Bow.

Upon this old familiar spot—  
As ancient legends say--  
In olden times a college rear'd  
Its gothic turrets grey.

And where the silver Leven flows,  
Fair cottages were seen,  
Surrounded by the smiling fields,  
And level pastures green.

There gentle maidens, sweet and fair,  
Their rustic labours plied ;  
And manly youths watch'd o'er their homes  
Array'd in martial pride ;

Or taught upon the fertile plain  
The waving grain to grow,  
And made the pastures smile around  
The ancient College Bow.

But sudden, from their fountains, burst  
The mountain torrents down,  
And with their waters mingling wild,  
Engulf'd the smiling town.

Vain then the maiden's shriek for aid—  
Her lover's struggles vain—  
The surging waste of waters wild  
Swept o'er the level plain !

What loving hearts, what swelling hopes,  
Were buried 'neath the wave—  
Old age and infancy alike  
Sunk in one common grave !

No storied monument is left  
Their resting-place to show ;  
No trace of them remains, except  
The ancient College Bow.

The College Bow was feeble age  
And childhood's glad resort—  
And here the youths were wont to strive  
In daring, manly sport.

Whilst merry groups of young and old  
At eventide were seen  
Reclin'd upon the sloping brae,  
Or scattered o'er the green.

And when the wither'd ashen leaves  
Fell rustling from the tree,  
We ran to catch them as they fell,  
With thoughtless infant glee ;

Or climb'd to see Benlomond's brow,  
O'erspread with winter's snow ;—  
O, childhood's happy memories cling  
Around the College Bow.

Though rooted from its former place,  
The arch still meets the eye,  
And still a grey memorial stands  
Of ages long gone by.

And through the tide of years to come  
Its hallow'd form will last—  
A dim connecting link between  
The present and the past.

But where is now the daisied green  
And sunny College brae ?  
Alas ! the ruthless hand of Time  
Has swept them all away.

Now o'er its well-remembered slopes  
The tides of traffic flow ;  
But in remembrance still will live  
The ancient College Bow.

The 1859 embanking of the Common has rendered the one hundred and thirty acres of comparatively unprofitable land comprised in it to be worth about one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and has further considerably improved the sanitary condition of the town.

It may be interesting to my readers to learn that the oak posts and beams which centuries ago had been used for the protection of the Broad Meadow were found in 1859 to be quite sound, so that it was not due to any failure on their part that the old-time embankments were in such a sad state of decay ; that was due to the imperfect nature of the stone and earthwork portion of them. The civil engineering of old times in this part of the country was of a very primitive and imperfect nature. The "Drowned Lands," in addition to adding now a goodly sum annually to the Common Good of the burgh, are fruitful of pleasure to the inhabitants thereof. More especially is this the case on Saturday afternoons, when the sons of toil in hundreds muster on the Meadow Park to play their favourite game of football before admiring multitudes of their brother workmen. The Golf Club grounds, which lie to the north of the Park, also then as a rule display unwonted bustle, by reason of the numbers of ladies and gentlemen who there and then do congregate in pursuit of their favourite and exhilarating pastime, while their flag floats gaily in front of their cosy club-house and all goes merry as a marriage bell.



The present condition of and the bright future prospects for the Broad Meadow should make all leal-hearted "Sons of the Rock" bless the memory of King James VI. who gifted the ground of old to their forbears with instructions that it should not be profaned by the plough, but kept in all time coming untilled in which state it is at present and is most likely to remain, unless some industrial enterprises be instituted within its borders.

The advent of such would be hailed with delight by the townsfolk as affording an additional security for the growing prosperity of the good old burgh, which has in its long, long history experienced so many and so great vicissitudes of fortune, ranging from being the capital of a kingdom to being a poor beggarly place, which frequently sent round the hat for aid to prevent its being swept off the face of the earth by the inroads of the waters of Leven and Clyde.





## Section II.

### MISCELLANEOUS EXCERPTS FROM OLD TIME RECORDS RELATING TO THE ROYAL BURGH OF DUMBARTON.

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#### DUMBARTON HELPS TO FIT OUT A SHIP AND BARK FOR SUPPRESSION OF PIRACY.

In 1587 the Convention of Royal Burghs met at Dundee and gave full powers to the burghs of Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee to appoint and agree in their names with Allan Lentroun in St Andrews for outrigging of a ship for suppression of the pirates who haunt this firth and other parts between Yarmouth, Orkney or Shetland for the sum of 1000 marks, whereby the whole burghs oblige themselves to refund to the three burghs named their proportion of the principal sum and interest if any has been paid. Then follows an exemption—"And because the Commissioneris of the burrowis of the west cuntry, sic as Glasqu, Irrwyne, Air, Dumbartan, and otheris sallahappin to haif ado for outredding of ane schip and bark, ather for occasion of piracy presentlie committit or to be committit, the

saidis haill burrowis obleissis thame to releve saidis west burrowis, or any ane of thame outredding of the said schip (and) bark, of sic sovmes as they salhappin to deburs to that effectt provyding the samyn exceid nocht the sovmes advancitt to the outred of the said Alane Lentroun and his bark, and provyding thatt the saidis west burrowis accord with the maisteris of the schippis they sall outred upon the same conditionis convenit upoun with Alane Lentroun." It does not appear whether the west country burghs fitted out a ship on their own account or whether they paid their quota of the charges for the fitting out of that of Allan Lentroun.

**APPOINTMENT OF CUSTOMAR AND COMPTROLLER  
FOR THE BURGH.**

"Dumbartan, Walter Watsoun of new admittit in the office of customar thairto to the first of October next in anno 1588, quhais aith they ordane the provost and baillies of the said burgh to resave for dew executing of his office (receiver of duty on goods), and that he sall four tymes in the yeir mak compte and rekning to the saidis provost and baillies, and offer as he salbe requiritt be thame, and they to place ane comptroller for quhome they salbe haldin to be ansuerablil vpon dew executing of his office to the burrowis."

**HELP WISHED FOR THE COLLEGE.**

"The Convention of date April 14, 1589, anentt the suppoirtt cravitt be the Commissioner of Dumbartan in name of the inhabitantis thairof, craving ane certan impoist of gudes for ane

certain space (of time) to be grantitt to thame for helping of thair college, continuois ansuer geving thairto to thair nixt generall assembleie of burrowis and ordanis the samyn to be contenit in the missives to be direct thairto."

#### DUMBARTON HAS A VISITATION OF THE PLAGUE.

In 1606 it was concluded by the Commissioners at the general convention that "vnderstanding the gritt decay of the brugh of Dumbartane be ressoun of the vesitation of the said brugh with the noysum plaig of pestelence thir dyverssie zeiris past, and that sen the last setting of the taxt roll at Brunteland in anno 1597 that thair is thre new erected brughis quhilk payit na extent of before, and is now sett at this tyme to ten schillingeis." They, therefore, granted Dumbarton relief to the extent of forty pence "of their compts" to endure for the space of three years.

In the October of 1635 as chronicled in the burgh records of Dumbarton, the town was once more in danger of being attacked by the noise-some pestilence which seemed at that time to be doing its dread work in no distant part of the kingdom for the records of sevint Oct. go on to say "In regaird to the bruit and rumor of the plaig of pestilence, The baillies and counsall inhibit and discharges all persounis within this burgh noways to resset or receave strangers till the magistrattis be acquent fyrst thairwith, vnder the paine to be punischt and sensurit with all vigor, And ordaine publicatioun to be maid be sound of drum thairof, as the baillies causit to do of befoir, and ordaine all unkuth beggars and

uthir puir strangers to be removit out of the burgh, and the baillies to tak tryall thairof, and caus the same to be dune, and because persounes and travellers do cum to the mercat on Setterdays weiklie, ordanis tua to stand on Fryday efternoone and on Setterday all day ilk weik as thay sall be warnit, tua at the brig (at the entrance to the town from the east) and tua at the Colledge (the point incomers would reach on their progress to the town from the north) ilk persoune vnder the pain of xl. sh. that beis warnit and failles, that gif straingeris cumis thay may be stayit (detained) till the magis, trattis be acquent." (Persons of an obnoxious kind coming into the town from the west would be stopped at the ferry by the ferryman.)

**DUMBARTON TO REPORT AS TO HOW THE MAGISTRATES AND COUNCIL OF SAME ARE ELECTED.**

The 1607 Convention of burghs was held at Dumbarton and the following finding is embraced in their minutes "Findis thatt all the burrowis of this realm aucht and sould mak thair forme of electioun of thair magistratis and counsale conforme to the actis of parliamentis and burrowis, and thairfoire ordanis the brugh of Dumbartane to produce to the nixt generall conventioun the maner and forme of thair electioun of the magistratis and counsall presentle vsit by thame, to be sene and considerit be the saidis burrowis giff the samyn be conforme to the saidis actis, to the effect the burrowis may tak ordour thairinto and sie that the samyn be conform to the saidis actis; and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue, vnder the pane of jc. li."

At the subsequent meeting in 1608 Dumbarton satisfied the Commissioners that they had obeyed the statutes anent the election of magistrates at Michaelmas last.

**DUMBARTON HELPS TO POLLUTE THE RIVER  
CLYDE.**

The Convention of 1608, which met at Selkirk, framed a minute which “ Ordanis the burghis of Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Renfrew to caus pen ane artickle to be gevin into the nixt Parliament for clensing of the watter of Clyid, and punisching of personnis quha polutis and defylis the samyn be deid careonnes (carrion) buckeis (bodies) and sic other filthe hurtfull to the fisheing.”

One is somewhat astonished to come upon an entry such as this. It shows all too plainly that our forbears at that far back time, when they, to a large extent, made their living of the curing and exporting of salmon and herring, had no more respect for the purity of the Clyde than we have, who live of shipbuilding and engineering, and eat our salmon largely as it comes to us from the U.S.A. in a tinned receptacle. The much-abused Clyde in the past, as in this present time, has been made a convenient scavenger and cheap carrier off of all manner of abominations, which ultimately rendered it all but fishless in its upper reaches as far as Glasgow. In this age of advancement a better spirit pervades society in regard to such matters. The noble city of Glasgow has heroically tackled the herculean, costly task of purifying its sewage before it is allowed to enter the river, and this action has been crowned with a most gratifying measure of

success. Doubtless the other Clyde burghs which have contributed, and are still contributing, to make the Clyde what it is, viz., a byword and reproach for evil smells, will be forced to follow in the steps of the Metropolis of the West, then after the lapse of a few years we may reasonably hope that the noble river will become as of old, a salmon-haunted one, to the delight and profit of those who dwell on its banks.

CHARGE TO DUMBARTON, ETC., ANENT GAUGE OF  
SALMON, ETC., BARRELS.

At Stirling, 3rd July, 1611, the Commissioners of burghs assembled in general convention resolved “Anent the nynt act of the last convention ordeiring the burghs of Glaskow and Air to extract the act of burrowes concerning the measure and tichtness of thair barrels of hering and salmond, and to observe the samyne, and all uther burghs quhom it effeirs to do the lyk ; the saids Commissioners, after long reasoning upon the samyne, ordeans the said burghs of Glaskow, Air, and Dumbartan, and the hail burrowes of the west, to mak thair saidis barrellis of the measures mentionat in the actis of Parliament maid thairanent, notwithstanding the act of burrowes maid at Selkirk, and to report thair diligence thairupon the nixt convention.” At the next meeting the west burghs agreed and consented to make the measures of their barrels of herring conform to the gauge of Leith, and their hogshead conform to the full Bordeaux tun gauge, and those for salmon to be according to the acts of burghs, the same to be begun on the first day of next May, their diligence there-



anent to be reported to the next general convention.

The Clyde burghs at this period did a large trade in the way of exporting to other parts of the realm and the continent of Europe, salmon and herrings, and other spoil of the sea, and those towns were naturally and very properly anxious that uniformity should be observed in regard to the size of barrels in which the fish were packed, and the careful classification of the finny tribe and branding of their receptacles, so as to beget in their favour the thorough confidence of buyers in the various markets in which they might be exposed for sale. It was customary in old times for the burgh of Dumbarton to gift herrings to persons whose favour the authorities wished to propitiate, as witness the following excerpt from the burgh records of date November 9, 1661 :—“ James Lindsay, theasurer, to causs make eight half barrels and fill the same with good and sufficient herring, for sending to Edinburgh from this burgh, for thair advocatt’s use, and to send them away with all convenience, and ordains ane barrel to be sent from this burghe to William Archour, for delyvering of them.”

The silver herring, which the song declares to be “ bonny fish and halesome fairing,” were in the past centuries as they are in a lesser degree in this present time a considerable factor in promoting the prosperity of the nation, and were not by any means considered by our forbears “ vulgar fairin’.”

**SUPPLICATION FOR AN IMPOST ON STRANGERS.**

At the general Convention held in Stirling, 1594, Dumbarton supplicates "for an impoist of strayngers cumand be boitt with guidis."

**DUMBARTON CHARGED ANENT COMMON GOOD AND COMMON LANDS.**

On 16th June, 1600, at Kinghorn, the Convention "the samyn day findis the brugh of Dumbartane nocht to have producit sufficient attestatioun of the rowpping and setting of thair commoun guid to the utter awaill, and thairfoir to have incurrit the pane and unlaw of twenty pundis and yit, for dyverssis caussis moveing thame, dispennssis with said unlaw, and understanding that the said brugh hes dyveressis commoun landis quhilkis ar nocht nor hes nocht bene put to the utter awaill, speciale thair comounmure, nochtwithstanding the affirmatioun of Thomas Fallisdail thair Comissioner, thairfoir thair ordane the said brugh to produce or send to the nixt generall Conventioun ane mair sufficient attestatioun in writt of the rowpeing and setting of thair commoun guid and commoun landis and perambulating of thair mercheis, according to the actis of burrowis set down thairanent, and speciale of thair said comoun mure quhilk gif it sall happin them to set in feu that the samyn be rowpitt thre seuerall dayis and set to fremen, inhabitantis of the said brugh, beiring all maner of burding within the saymn, quaha will gif maist thairfoir, and to na otheris, and to reporte or send in writt thair delegece heirvpon vnder the pane of tua hundreth pundis to be

payit to the burrowis be the said brugh incais thai failze, reserwand awayis to the commoun vse of brugh, licence of querrell (quarrying)—there was and still is in Dumbarton Muir freestone of an admirable quality—faill (sods) dewat (divots) peitt, truffe (turf) and hedder, and to be ane heid of the missiue.” As will be seen by a deliverance of a subsequent meeting of the Convention of Royal Burghs the restrictions anent the common good and the common lands being only feued or set to freemen of the burgh of Dumbarton was repealed.

In 1614 at Kirkcaldy the Convention “finds the burgh of Dumbarton to have done diligence anent the chaarge given to thaim be the agent for making thair hering barrells conform to the jadge of Leyth, and ordeans the burgh of Edinburgh to try how many gallens ilk barrell sould contein, and Edinburgh report thair diligence heiranent to the nixt Conventioun, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue..”

**DUMBARTON PROTESTS AGAINST INVERARAY  
BEING ENROLLED AS A FREE ROYAL BURGH.**

At Edinburgh 1649 the Convention of royal burghs enrolled the burgh of Inveraray as one of the number.

“As also Maister James Campbell, Commissioner for the burgh of Dumbartane, compeared and protestit the inrollment of the said burgh of Inveraray amongst the number of the free royall burrowis sould not be prejudiciall to the libertie of the said burgh of Dumbartane nor to any actione that they may intend befor the lordis against them and their liberties, to

quhom the saidis Commissioneris reservis actionu  
*prout de jure.*”

Dumbarton down to about the beginning of this century had a considerable business connection with Inveraray and the West Highlands within a moderate radius, and it was therefore a purely selfish opposition they offered to the enrolment of Inveraray as a burgh royal. In doing as they did, they just acted in the spirit of the age they lived in which was one of a restrictive intolerant nature

THE COMMON MILNE OF DUMBARTON TO BE  
RECOVERED.

At Edinburgh 7th July, 1654, “the present Commissioneris of burrowis ordains the burgh of Dumbartane, with the concurrence of the agent, to prosecut the actione intentit be theme against John Semple son to umquhill (deceased) John Semple, lat provest of their burgh, anent recovering of thair comoun milne furth of his handis to be added to the comoun good of thair burgh.”

In 1655 it was reported to the Convention by the Commissioner of Dumbarton and the agent “that summons of reduction has been raised against John Semple, of which the Commissioners approved and further ordered diligence.”

This was likely a case where the finances of the burgh being low the town's miln was illegally disposed of to the provost thereof, for in all probabliity a most inadequate consideration. It is generally believed in the burgh that subsequent provosts secured burgh lands on very

easy terms which they were allowed to retain. These did not serve the town for nought.

**DUMBARTON WISHES SUPPORT FOR BUILDING A  
BRIDGE OVER THE LEVEN.**

At Edinburgh 7th July, 1682, "The Convention haveing considered the petition of the burgh of Dumbartoun and ane act of his Majesties Privie Councill appointing a voluntar contribution for building a stane bridge upon the watter of Leven near Dumbartoun, the Convention doe recommend the samyn to the nixt generall convention." The 1684 convention "ordained the article of the missive anent building of the bridge of Dumbarton to be continued, and recommended each burgh to pay their part of the contribution."

The Convention of 1686 "desired the burghs which had not done so to make the voluntary contribution appointed for Dumbarton for help towards building their bridge over the Leven." The Convention of 1695 stopped the calling up of contributions from the burghs to aid Dumbarton in the erection of a bridge because it did not yet appear that the foundation of same had been laid, but as soon as that was accomplished then the collection of contributions shall be commenced to aid in the construction of same. The Dumbarton burgh records of date July 4th, 1691, show that certain stones designed for the bridge were sold to the laird of Kilmaronock." This transaction has a bad look on the face of it. The building of the bridge was not begun till 1754, eighty-three years after the matter was first mooted. For the work about £500 was

raised in the neighbourhood, but the building cost a considerable sum in excess of this, which was liquidated by the government. John Brown, a worthy burghess of the town, built the bridge, and built it well. It still does duty in an improved style, and is likely to do so for a long time to come.

In Dumbarton Churchyard there is a tombstone erected over the remains of the bridge builder, having on it this inscription—"Here lies interred John Brown, mason, late Bailie in Dumbarton, who died 17th May, 1773, aged 69 years. He built the bridge here by the order of the Government, and likeways many other buildings for Government through Scotland."

#### LIBERTY GIVEN THE BURGH TO SET ITS COMMON MILL ON TACK.

In the records of Convention of date 10th July, 1691, there appears what follows "Granted warrant to the burgh of Dumbarton to set their common mill on tack for nineteen years," providing always that the samyn be done be way of publict roup and having the consent of the deacons of crafts and most substantiall burghesses of the said burgh and not vnder the former tack dewty."

#### PART OF THE COMMON LANDS OF THE BURGH DISPOSED OF.

18th July, 1695, "The Convention ratified, approved, and confirmed to Mr William Cochrane of Kilmarnock (brother of John, second Earl of Dundonald) a charter granted by the magistrates, town council, and community of Dumbartoun, dated 5th November, 1692, of common lands

belonging to that burgh and lying within the territory of the same, reserving certain highways through the lands, to be holden of the Magistrates and Council as superiors, and paying therefor £4 Scots of feu duty yearly."

DUMBARTON TO BE VISITED AND ITS STATE  
REPORTED ON.

Of date 4th July, 1700, the Convention "Having considered petitions from Dunfreise and Dumbartoune, the Commissioners appointed Committees to visit them and report as to their Common good, trade, and public works." One report runs thus:—

"BURGH OF DUMBARTOUNE.

"Dumbartoun, the fourth day of May, jm vjc nyntie and tuo years. Compeared befor James Fletcher, provost of Dundie, and Alexander Walker, baillie of Aberdeen, Commissioners appointed be the Convention of the royall burrowes for visiting the wholl burghs royall be west and south the river of Forth, the present magistrats and towne clerk of the said burgh of Dumbartoune, who gave ane accompt of ther patrimonie and Comon good, together with ane answer to the saidis visitors instructiones, as follows:—

As to the first article, it is answered that ther Comon good, *Communibus annis*, amounts to £1,343 6s 8d, besides the sowme of ane hundreth and threttie pounds of small customes yearly for mantaineing of ther water works, and that ther debts dew be bonds consists of nyne thousand marks Scots monie of principall.

2. As to the second article, it is answered that



they have no mortificationes belonging to them save some to ther poor and Kirk Sessione.

3. As to the third article, it is answered that they are no wayes concerned therin.

4. As to the fourth article, its answered that they are not concerned therin haveing a harbour of ther own.

5. As to the fyfth article, it is answered that they have produced ther theasaurers bookes for preceeding years whereout the Commissioners have found the ballance of these years to be as followes:—Imprimus from 1686 to 1687, the theasaurer is supperexpended the sowme of 920 lib. 3s 7d Scots mony ; item, from 1687 to 1688 is supperexpended the sowme of seaven pound ten shillings ; item, from 1689 to 1690, the theasaurer is supperexpended the sowme of one hundreth and fyfty one pound fyve shillings one pennie Scots ; and that ther equies with clerks and other dewes extends to the sowme of 18 lib. 7s.

6. As to the sixth article, it is answered that they have no forraigne trade, and all there inland trade consists of some small goodes they retails from Glasgow and other royall burghs of ane inconsiderable value, and that they have vented (sold) fyve years by gone about ane hogshead and ane half of French wyne and a hogshead of brandie, and that they vent and consume weekly about four bolls of malt or therby."

7. As to the seaventh article, its answered that they have no ships, barks or boats belonging to them, except a small bark of twenty four tunns about the value of ane thousand marks, and is

employed by Glasgow merchants and other strangers, and three small herring boates ane hundreth marks value one with another.

8. As to the eight article, it is answered that they are neither owners nor partners of any shipes, barks or boats belonging either to burghs royall, or regality or barronie, nor are they concerned in trade with unfree burghs.

9. As to the nyynth article its answered that ther cess is mostly paid out of the Comon good and the rest by a tax on the ablest inhabitantes.

10. As to the tenth article, its answered that ther minister is payed out of the teynds, and that ther schoolmaster, advocats, agents, commissionars chairges, and all other ther public servants, are payed out of ther Comon good.

11. As to the elleaventh article, it is answered that all ther publict workes are mantainit and upholden out of the Comon good.

12. As to the twelth article, it is answered that the most pairt of ther houses are inhabited by ther respective heretors, and the rent of ther best and warst will be tuixt fourty pounds (£3 6s 8d stg.) and four marks (a little under 4s 6d stg.), and that they have no stranger inhabitants, and that a great pairt of ther best houses are waste.

13. As to the threteenth article it is answered that they have tuo yearly fairs, each of two days containwance, and a weekly marcat, the customes of all which are a pairt of ther Comon good and accordingly stated in answer to ther first article.

14. As to the fourteenth article, it is answered that they have tuo regalities, Kilpatrick and

Kilmar(o)nock, and two barronies, Kirkintilloch and Cumbernauld, which burghs are highly prejudicial to ther trade.

15. As to the fyfteenth article, it is answered that they have no casual good accrews to them but what is a pairt of ther Comon good as in answer to the first article.

This is the trew accompt of the state and conditione of the said burgh of Dumbartoune, in answer to the above mentioned instructiones, as it is given up, upon oath, by the saids magistrate and towne clerk, undersubscryveing, to the best of ther knowledge and surest informatione they can have, to the saids visitors, day, place and year of God abovewrittin, *sic subscribitur* W. Craig, provost; Rob Duncanson, baillie; Ro. Mitchell, baillie; Wm. Campbell, dean of gild; Jo. Macalpine, clerk.

What a sad state of matters the foregoing report presents—the Common good of the burgh year after year steadily going to the bad—the chief burgesses living in domiciles worth between three and four pounds of annual rent, and those of low degree dwelling in hovels appraised at barely four shillings and sixpence sterling.

About this period the local authorities had to interdict certain heritors from pulling down their properties with a view to the materials being utilised in some more favoured location. Ichabod! Ichabod!! might then have been uttered in wailing tones over the ancient capital of the Strathclyde Britons, in its fallen state, its ancient glory, quite eclipsed, seemingly for ever. But only seemingly, for the revolving years have brought about a glorious outburst of prosperity,

and the erstwhile poor decayed burgh has become one of the most prosperous in the land and a centre of light and leading.

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN DUMBARTON AND  
GLASGOW.**

At Edinburgh, 9th July, 1700, "The Convention having considered the contract and agreement between Glasgow and Dumbartoun, which these burghs desire to be ratified, they instructed the clerk to record the contract with their ratification after the dissolving of this Convention.

This was duly attended to, and terms of peace were arranged between the rival burghs after many years of litigation. Dumbarton vested in Glasgow many rights it claimed to possess, and in exchange for which that city agreed to pay to Dumbarton the sum of "four thousand and five hundred marks good and usuall Scots money." In the arrangement it was specially provided that the contracting parties should be exempted from the payment of dues at each other's ports. It was expressly provided that the sum to be paid to Dumbarton by Glasgow "should be devoted to the payment of their burgh's debt *pro tanto*, for the purpose of showing that the transaction is reasonable and onerous, and that no one may have grounds for considering that the contract is proceeded upon from any collusion, but upon fair and just grounds tending to the benefit and advantage of both burghs."

**DUMBARTON SPOKEN OF AS THE SCOTTISH PORT  
FOR IRISH WOOL.**

On 9th July, 1718, the Convention of Royal Burghs met at Edinburgh, and they "Consider-

ing that it might be of great benefite to the Manufactories of this part of the United Kingdom if a port were opened for the importation of wool from Ireland, and that if the same could be obtained the port of Dumbarton would be the most commodious place, they did therefore appoint application to be made to the parliament for that effect, and remitted to the Commissioners of nine burghs as a committee to draw up reasons to be offered to the parliament for opening said port for the importation of the said Irish wool."

At a committee meeting held in Edinburgh 18th November, 1718, "In pursuance of the 21st Act of last general convention the Committee remitted to the Commissioners of Dumbarton and North Berwick to prepare reasons to be offered to parliament for obtaining the burgh of Dumbarton as a port for importing wool from Ireland."

At a committee meeting held in Edinburgh 10th December, 1718, a draft petition was presented to the same anent the application to parliament for leave to make Dumbarton the port for the importation of Irish wool.

The opening paragraph goes on to state that the woollen manufactory in Scotland is a great branch of their trade, and being improved will considerably increase the woollen manufactory of Great Britain. Further it is the opinion of the petitioners that the opening of a port in Scotland for the importation of Irish wool would enable the manufacturers to have a greater variety of wool at their command, and so enable them to improve their products. As Liverpool

is the nearest port to Scotland open for the importation of Irish wool, it is thought that the charges of bringing wool from thence make it impracticable for the manufacturers to bring their needed supplies from that quarter, they therefore suggest that "the toun of Dumbartoun, situated upon the mouth of the river Clyde and upon the western coast of Scotland, opposit to Ireland, is in your petitioners apprehension the most proper port for that purpose."

It doth not appear on the records whether any deliverance was given by parliament on the subject. It is, however, quite certain that the object aimed at was not hit.

**JAMES DUNCANSON OF GARSHAKE APPOINTED  
TOWN CLERK FOR LIFE.**

At Edinburgh 9th July, 1719, "The Convention ratified and approved a gift of the clerkship granted by the toun of Dumbarton in favour of James Duncanson of Garshake. The gift, which is dated 30th September, 1717, bears that "The provost, baillies, and council, accompanied with the hail deacons of trades of the said burgh, taking into their serious consideration the fidelity, assiduity, dilligence, and integrity of James Duncanson of Garshake, late baillie, in all the publick and commone affaires and concerns of this burgh, and the sufficient proof, experience and sense they have of his qualifications and abilities for the office of commone clerk of the said burgh, in respect wherof the Council find themselves obliged to put also great marks of their respect upon him as has been put upon other clerks by several burghs of the

kingdom ; therefore, and in regard they find it will be of considerable and singular importance for the commone well of this burgh and the good of the publick effaires therof that the said James Duncanson be continued in the office of clerkship during all the days of his lifetime, the saidis provost, bailies, Council, and deacons of crafts ” elected and nominated him to be common clerk off the burgh, with full power to exercise the duties and uplift the fees, to appoint deputes to act during his absence, for whom he shall be responsible, but he “being obliged to officiat as clerk in all meetings and committees of the Council as oft as they shall have occasion to meet upon the touns affaires.”

James Duncanson of Garshake was a man of mark in his day. When he was a writer in Edinburgh he was appointed Clerk of Supply of the County of Dumbarton, having the special privilege accorded him of discharging by deputy the important duties appertaining to the office.

As town clerk of the burgh he, to a large extent, guided its successive Councils and shaped its destinies. He was the owner of the lands of Garshake, Overtoun, Maryland, and Priestyard, his residence being in that property which lies to the west of the Elephant Hotel, Dumbarton, through which the Quay Pend gives access to the harbour. An outside stair, which still exists, led up to the door of his domicile, which must have been one of considerable extent and importance, for within its walls the hospitable laird of Garshake entertained the highest people in the county, including members of the house of Argyll, to bed and board. The



huge building in which he lived was built in 1623 by an Earl of Glencairn, and most likely became the property of Mr Duncanson, for the land is still commonly called "Garshake." Another town clerk of the burgh, hight Colquhoun, in more recent years inhabited and owned the erstwhile quarters of Duncanson, and between them they left stowed away in an attic many scores of bundles of law and other papers, which were only recently come upon, and the most interesting of the same were by me transcribed and published in the *Glasgow and Dumbarton Herald*s, and evoked at the time a considerable amount of interest. The only portion of the goodly heritage possessed by James Duncanson, which was transmitted to his descendants, was Priestyard, which after the death of his granddaughter, Katherine, was acquired by Robert Duncanson MacKenzie of Caldarvan, a relation of the family, who sold it to his nephew, Lord Overtoun, of whose estate it now forms a portion.

Among the documents alluded to above there are several which throw a little light on Garshake's private affairs monetary and otherwise. For instance, there is before me as I write an account, of date Glasgow, 27th "Juhn," 1726, which shews what he paid for his shoes, and runs on thus—"An Account of Garcheacks in Dumbarton to David Noble Cordener in Glasgow, in which it appears that Garshake's wife or lady as she is termed in the account was supplied on Dec. 30, 1725, with a pair Mariken (foot gear made of dressed goat skin) the charge for same being three shillings, and four pairs to the laird,

and one pair to Mr Andrew were supplied in 1726 costing four shillings each pair, which is receipted thus—"Glasgow, 30th Jun, 1726, Receivid full and compleet payment of the above account except Mr Andrew's, pr. pr. me David Noble. The whole bill came to one pound three shillings and sixpence. I wonder if Mr Andrew was the black sheep of the family when the head of the house refused to pay for his shoes ?

There are also in my collection of papers some which refer to Walter Duncanson and Robert Duncanson's (James Duncanson's descendants) monetary affairs, but these are of no interest to any one, and therefore will be allowed to moulder into dust unchronicled in this veracious history of events of considerable pith and moment.

#### AN ILLEGAL ELECTION OF MAGISTRATES AND COUNCIL PROTESTED AGAINST.

On 18th October, 1727, "There was presented to the annual committee at Edinburgh a petition for Mr George Smollet, present provost of the town of Dumbarton, for himself and in name of the other magistrats of the said burgh setting furth that albeit they were legally elected to the offices of provost, baillies and councillors of the said burgh, within the town house thereof upon the anniversary or usual day of election, yet that Willian Buntine, late baillie of Dumbarton, Alexander Weir, late dean of guild, William Straquair, late thesaurer, David Weir, William Laing, and Alexander Weir, Councillors, and others their adherents, having withdrawn from the said common Council house, had taken upon them to make the forme of ane election of

magistrats and counsell in a change house (pub.) and which pretended magistrats have attempted to doe and execut acts of administration in contempt of the authority of the legal magistrats and to the disturbance of the publick peace of the burgh, and therefore craveing that the annual committee would provide such suitable remedy as they should think fitt, which being considered by the committee they appoint the forenamed persons complained of, with their adherents, to be summoned to attend the Committee at the burrows rume in Edinburgh upon Friday the twenty seventh of October instant (to answer the complaint).”

The Committee met on 6th November, 1727, when no appearance was put in on behalf of the parties complained against. Taking all the circumstances of the case into due consideration it was decided that they would recommend the next general Convention to grant the lawful authorities of Dumbarton such pecuniary aid and support as might be deemed necessary to enable them to bring a law suit against the offending parties to a speedy issue. The magistrates evidently without such assistance being unable the prosecute the law suit on account of the low circumstances of the burgh.

At Edinburgh 8th July, 1731, the General Convention “Allowed to Dumbarton £20 sterling to help to defray expenses of law suits mentioned in that burgh’s petition.”

How this matter of dual local government eventuated does not appear in the printed records of the Convention of Royal Burghs. I made a personal search of the Town Council

Records of Dumbarton to ascertain if these could throw any more light on the subject, but I searched in vain. To my thinking the legally constituted authorities thought it beneath their dignity to record in their minutes aught about the usurpers or their proceedings. We are, therefore, left in darkness as to how the controversy was settled, but to judge by entries anent the same in the Records of Royal Burghs this possibly unique double government lasted for the space of four years at least, leaving behind it only the above brief record of its existence "to point a moral and adorn a tale."

The foregoing matter has been principally got out of public records. In what follows I have the pleasure of presenting to my readers copies of interesting documents which are in private hands. The two first are the property of my long and trusty friend, ex-Bailie George Bell of this town, who has kindly placed them at my disposal for publication.

JOHN BELL BOUND APPRENTICE TO HIS FATHER  
AS A BUTCHER.

"This Indenture made the first day of May in the twenty first year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the second, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the ffaith and so forth, and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty eight Witnesseth that John Bell, son of Richard Bell of Brampton, in the parish of Brampton in the county of Cumberland, hath of his own free and voluntary will placed and bound himself apprentice unto the said Richard

Bell his father, Butcher, to learn the said Trade, Mystery or occupation of a Butcher, which he the said Richard Bell now useth, and with him as an Apprentice, to dwell continually with him from the day of the date hereof to the full term of seven years from thence, next insuing and fully to be compleat and ended. During all which term of seven years, the said apprentice his said master well and faithfully shall serve, his secrets keep, his Lawful Command, g'adly do and obey ; Hurt to the said master he shall not do, nor willfully suffer to be done by others, but of the same to the utmost of his power shall forthwith give notice to the said master. The Goods of the said master he shalln't imbozil or waste, nor them lend, without his consent to any, at Cards, Dice, or any other unlawful Games, he shall not play. Taverns or Alehouses he shall not Frequent ; Fornication he shall not Commit. Matrimony he shall not Contract. From the service of the said master he shall not at any time depart or absent himself without his said Master's Leave ; but in all Things as good and faithful apprentice, shall and will demean—and behave himself towards his said Master and all his, during the said Term. And the said Master shall the said Trade, Mystery and occupation of a Butcher which he now useth with all things thereunto belonging shall and will learn and instruct, or cause to be well and sufficiently taught and instructed after the best way and manner he can, and shall and will also find and allow unto his said apprentice Meat, Drink, Washing, and Lodging and all other Necessaries and Conveniences for such an

apprentice during the term aforesaid. And lastly for the due performance of the Covenants and agreements aforesaid the said John Bell and Gilbert Elliot—and the said Richard Bell and Simon Ewart—Do bind themselves their heirs, executors and administrators each to these presents. In Witness whereof the parties above named have to these presents interchangeably set their hands and sea's, the day and year first above written—

(Signed) JOHN BELL.  
 GILBERT ELLIOT.  
 RICHARD BELL.  
 SIMON EWART.

Witness,  
 JAMES HARDING.

The John Bell of the above indenture was grandfather of Messrs John Bell and George Bell, Dumbarton, and Finlay Bell, Glasgow.

I now give a copy of the said John Bell's burghess ticket which is well written on vellum, and has stamped on its back the Town's Arms and Motto *Fortitudo et Fidelitas* executed in quite a high class imposing style.

“At Dumbarton the twentieth day of April seventeen hundred and seventy nine years.

“In presence of The Right Honourable Lord Frederick Campbell Provost of the Burgh of Dumbarton, James Colquhoun and Archibald M'Cochell Esquires Bailies, Robert Martin Dean of Guild and William Hunter Treasurer thereof, Compeared Mr John Bell Flesher in Carlile who was admitted and received an

Burgess and Guild Brother of Dumbarton with power to him to hold and enjoy all the priviledges and Immunities thereto belonging.

Extracted by me,

“JOHN M‘AULAY.”

The above John M‘Aulay was he who entertained the Poet Burns at his residence at Leven Grove, when the bard visited Dumbarton.

**BANK BILL TO BE PAID AT THE POST OFFICE OF  
DUMBARTON.**

The following excerpt from an old law document found in the Great House at the Cross, commonly called “Garshake,” is of interest for one or two reasons. Firstly, it raises a doubt about the correctness of a glen at Lochgoilhead being Yclept Hell’s, and, secondly, it shows that in the absence of banks the post office of Dumbarton was a place where bills were made payable. The complaint runs on thus :—

Unto The Honble His Majesties Sheriff Depute of Dumbartonshire complains Dougald M‘Dougald, in Hills glen—That whereas the complainer by his bill or precept dated the twenty-first day of January 1747 years Draun by him upon and accepted by Humphray Baine Millner Benihrae (Bannachra) Ordered him against the seventeenth March next after the date of said bill, To have payed to the complainer or order In the post office of Dumbartane the sum of fourteen pound Scots money for value received from the complainer, as the said bill of the date forsaid herewith produced will verifie. And albeit the said Dugald M‘Dugald hes oft and diverse times Desired and required the said Humphray Baine



To have made payment to him of the said prinll., sum and interest thereof—Nevertheless he most wrongously refuses and postpones to pay the same. The pursuer therefore asks the Sheriff to decern and ordain that the said Humphray Baine make payment of fourteen pounds Scots of principal and interest thereof and four pounds money fforsaid in name of Dammages and expenses of plea according to Justice. The decree craved for was given.

**THE MINISTER OF DUMBARTON LOSES HIS WIFE.**

As a specimen of the style in which funeral letters were written over a hundred years ago I subjoin one received by Mr William Shortridge, partner in a Vale of Leven printfield firm and an ancestor of John William Burns of Kilmahew and Cumbernauld, to whose courtesy I am indebted for a copy of the production, which was all written by the hand of the minister of Dumbarton :—

Dr Sir,—It pleased the wise and Righteous Sovereign to remove from me on Wednesday last by death the Desire of my Eyes—Her precious Remains are to be buried here tomorrow at 4 o'clock. If it is at all convenient for you to attend, your company there will much oblige

Dr Sir your most hum'le servt

JAS OLIPHANT

Dumbn 31 March 1780.

Mr Oliphant was married to Janet, daughter of Humphrey Colquhoun of Barnhill by his second wife Margaret Williamson, and that accounts for his being minister of Dumbarton. He was not the choice of the people. He was

forced upon them in the bad old times when might was right, and to the record of such doings there falls to be appended the dismal tale of the secessions and disruptions many which have rent asunder the at one time undivided Church of Scotland.





## Section III.

### DUMBARTON'S DISPUTES WITH GLASGOW, RENFREW, AND OTHER BURGHS.

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#### AN IMPOST ON SALT BY KIRKCUDBRIGHT RESENTED.

At Kirkcaldy 14th June, 1592, “Anent the Complent giffin in be the Commissioniris of Air, Glasquow, Vrwing, and Dumbartane, aganis the burch of Kirkcowbrik, for uplifting an extortiou of thame, being friemen, in taking four bollis great-salt, land missure, of ilk schip and bark that arrivis within thair harbrie, ordanis the said complenaris togidder with the said burch of Kirkcowbrik to compeir vnder the pane of xx libris, and this to be rememberit in missiwis.” “At Dysart in 1593 the case assumed this aspect Anent the fyft heid of the missiue concerning the complayntt of Air, Glasquow, Irrowyne, and Dumbartane agains Kirkcudbrycht, for vplifting of thame, being friemen, of foure bollis greitt saltt, land mesour, of ilk schip and bark arryueing within thair harbery, as at lenth is contenit in the actt of the

last Conventioun, the Commissionaris of the said burrowis of Air, Glasquow, and Dumbartane being presentt, and the said burgh of Kirkcudbrycht being aft-tymes callit, and nocht compear and decernis the said burgh of Kirkcudbrycht in ane other vnlaw of tuentie poundis, to be vplifted be thair agent, for thair nocht compearance to ansuer to the said complaynt, being lawfullie wairnit thairto be the Common missiue, and ordanis the said burgh to be wairinit of new to the nixt generall Conventioun, quhaireuer the samin salhappin to be haldin, to ansuer to the said complaynt, bringand with thame thair rychtis and resounis, with certificatioun, and thay failzie, thay sall be decernit simpliciter to desist and ceis fra all vptaking of the said foure bolls greitt saltt, and this to be rememberit in the missiues."

At the Convention held in Stirling in 1594 the Commissioner of Kirkcudbright being present, as well as the representatives of the Complainers, it was arranged that if the former at a subsequent meeting did not prove its case, then the meeting "Ordanes the said burgh of Kirkcudbright, defender to refund the said custome swa far as thai sall get fra the daitt heiroyf, in cais thai succumb in preving the said exceptioun."

At the subsequent meeting of Convention only one or two of the witnesses who had been summoned by Kirkcudbright for the defence put in an appearance, and progress was therefore stopped, and the pursuers protested *quo ad alias* provides and assigns the third day of July in the next generall Convention to do further diligence

on the said witnesses, and warned both said parties *apud acta*.

At the 1596 meeting only one of the witnesses summoned by Kirkcudbright turned up, the great majority of them were defaulters in spite of having been warned and charged to appear by the letters of the King, and it was decreed if they were still contumacious and did not appear at the next meeting of Convention, then further diligence should pass upon the said witnesses and the foresaid Commissioners warned *apud acta*. What the issue of the controversy was does not appear in the records. It was evidently a case of "much cry and little wool." The greitt salt was brought from the Continent and used for pickling salmon and herring, in which the Clyde burghs did a large foreign and home trade.

DISPUTE WITH RENFREW AND GLASGOW ANENT  
IMPOSTS EXACTED ON THE CLYDE.

At a meeting of the Particular Convention held in Edinburgh on 7th November, 1600, the following was agreed to, "The samyn day, anent the contraversie movet betwixt the burghis of Glasgow, Renfrow, and Dumbarten, vpon aither of thair liberteis vpone the wattir of Clyde, and exactioun of the lait impoist grantit be our souerane lord to the brugh of Dumbarten, vpon ane act of particuler conventioun of burrowis haldin at Edinburgh in Junii last, the tryall quhair of and explanatioun of the said act of burrowis is be ane act of secret counsall dated at Sterling the tent of September last, is remittet to the present Commissionaris, as at

lenth is contenit in the saidis actis and supplicatioun geven in be the said brugh of Dumbarten thairanent, Schir George Elphinstoun of Blythiswoid, Knicht, proveist James Forret and James Tempill, Commissioneris for the burgh of Glasgow, William Somervell, Commissioner for the burgh of Renfrow, and Thomas Fallisdail, Commissioner for the burgh of Dumbarten, being present, the saidis Commissioneris of burrowis findis that thai can nocht presentlie geve furth thair explanatioun of the liberteis of the saidis 3 burghis vpon the said watter of Clyde without forder cognitioun or deliberatioun to be tane or haid thairanent; and anent the said act of burrowis tuiching the said impost, the saidis Commissioneris declairis that nocht the meaning of the burrowis that the said burgh of Dumbarten sould (be vertew of the said act) vplift the said imposit vpon the said watter of Clyde, bot in the watter of Leven only, and this thair declaratioun thai will to be vnderstand without prejudice of the liberteis of the saidis thre burghis or ony of thame quhilk thay had or pretend to haif vpon the said watter befor the granting of the said impost and licence thairof."

**COMPLAINT MADE AGAINST THE BURGHS OF  
AYR AND IRVINE.**

At Ayr 7th July, 1602, The minutes of the Convention after engrossing a good many conclusions come to anent various matters proceed to state that "The samyn day, anent the complaint of the Commissioneris of Glasgow, Renfrow, for themselfis and in name of the

brugh of Dumbartane, aganis the burghis of Air, Irewin, and magistratis thairof, for suffering the fischeris quha fischis in thair watteris to fische with sandeill polkis (small bag nets) to the grit distructioun of the hering fry, werry hurtfull and prejudicial to the fisching of hering, and sua hurtfull to the hail estait of merchandis, as lykwaiss in suffering the saidis fischeris to tak the fry of the said hering and selling the samyn in thair merkettis, baith the Commissioneris being present, the saidis Commissioneris of burrowis ordanis the saidis brughis to caus all persouns to decist and ceiss fra all fisching with the said sandeill polkis and distroying of the fry of hering within thair liberteis and boundis, and all vther places as far as thai may, and nocht to suffer nane of the said fry to be sauld within thair boundis, and mak publicatioun thairvpon, and the present Commissioneris to intymy the saymyn to thair magistratis and report attestatioun thairof and of thair delegece to the nixt generall Conventioun, vnder the pane of fourty pundis, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue." The immediately following business was also transacted at this meeting.

DUMBARTON, GLASGOW, AND RENFREW COM-  
PLAINED AGAINST BY AYR.

"The samyn day, vpon complaint of the brugh of Air, ordanis the burghis of Glasgow, Dumbartane, Renfrow, to sie that the watter of Clyid and all partis neir to thame, and speciale within thair awin boundis, be keipet clene, and vnpo!utit and (not) defylet with deid caryouns (putrefying flesh) bukeis (bodies) and sic vther



filthe materis hurtfull to the fishing, and punische the offenderis, and to caus clense the said watter of the filth alreddy cassin in, vnder the pane of fourty pundis *totiis quoliis*, to be payit to the burrowis sua aft as thai salbe tryit to be regligent thairin, and to caus proclamatioun to be maid thervpoun throw thair burghis in dew tyme of yeir."

One can hardly realise how it was possible that all the pollution that Glasgow, Renfrew, and Dumbarton at that far back time could throw into the Clyde would injuriously affect the distant town of Ayr, and yet the inhabitants thereof must have had a grievance thereanent, more or less. Verily our rivers in the past as in the present have been prostituted to very base purposes.

#### DUMBARTON MAKES COMPLAINT AGAINST GLASGOW AND RENFREW.

At Perth, on the 5th day of July, 1604, the records of Convention go on to state that:—  
 "The samyn day, anent the complaint of the brugh of Dumbartane contrair the brughis of Glasgow and Renfrew, viz., the brugh of Glasgow for vplifting ane peny at thair brig of custome, conforme to ane licence grantit to them be the burrowis quhilk is lang syne expirit, and the brugh of Renfrew for suffering ane number of vnfremen to keip oppin merkittis in selling of stapill wairis in the clachenis of Kylmacolm and the new Kirk of Girnok (Greenock), within thair liberty and fredome but (without) controlment, ordanis the saidis brughis to be warnet be the generall missine to ansuer to the

said complaintis, vnder the pane of ane vnlaw of xx li."

At the 1605 Convention, held in Dumfries, the Commissioner for Renfrew, William Somerwell, produced letters of horning executed against certain of the unfree traders complained against by Dumbarton, and was ordained to register the said letters against such as he has suspended or those who have found caution, and to prosecute the same before the Lords of Session, and to report his diligence thereanent to the next Convention, and against all others within their liberty under the pain of twenty pounds Scots. And this deliverance was to be one head of the next missive.

On the same occasion Glasgow, through its Commissioner, alleged that the period within which that burgh was entitled to uplift a penny of custom at their brig had not expired, but as he could not exhibit any documentary evidence to that effect it was concluded that if the Commissioner could not at next meeting of Convention lay the same before its members, then Glasgow shall be discharged of uplifting of the said custom in all time coming. It does not appear he could produce the evidence wished, so that Dumbarton came off triumphant in this little tussle with its neighbours.

A COMMISSIONER OF DUMBARTON TO PASS INTO ENGLAND.

At Perth, 10th July, 1604, the Convention "Gewis powir to the Commissioneris of burrowis that ar appointed to convene at Edinbrugh for the mater of the Vnion to grant supply to ane

Commissioner of Dumbartane to pas in Ingland gif thai think it neidfull, vtherwayis nocht."

At Dundee, in 1606, the Commissioners assembled there, taking into account the supplication of Dumbarton to the Convention for funds to enable it to furnish out a Commissioner to proceed to England to his Majesty to crave support for the burgh, which to all appearance was to decay "without tymeous remeid." The Commissioners bound themselves to lay the matter before their respective burghs at their home going, so as to be able to give a deliverance on the same at the next Convention. It doth not appear what the issue was.

#### CONTROVERSIES BETWIXT DUMBARTON AND RENFREW.

The Council records of Dumbarton of date 27th October, 1631, contain what immediately follows—"The quhilk day, fforasmeikill as yesterday the proveist, baillies, and certaine of the Counsall, met with the proveist and baillies of Renfrew (who) producit a forme of testimoniall gevin out be the Forestar of Corstorphin, as chamberland of Scotland for the tyme, schawand that anent the controverseis betuix Dumbartane and Renfrew he had causit baith the burrowis to compeir in ae court halden be him at Glasgow, the (xxij) day of November jm sax hundreth twentie-nyne yeirs, quhare thay compearand. The same was put to the knowledge of ae assize, particularie namit therein, fand Renfrew was in possessioun of the shotts of the fysching of the sandbed and of the said streime of the wattir of Clyd to the blakstaine, and of

the customs and ankorage within themselfis, and fra thence furth down the rest debaitabill to belong equallie and be devidid betuix Dunbartane and Renfrew, quhilk testimoniall is unsubscryvit, but certaine bittis of auld seills thair of, allegit to be the seill of the chamberland and certan of the assyze, daittit at Edinburgh the——day of Januar, 1629. Thairfor, in respect, the laird of Grinok hes summonit Renfrow and Dunbartane to produce thair rytes quhairby thay uptak fra his men customs of the corn brot into Clyd out of Ireland, and that Renfrew in all mennis memorie has nevir been in possessioun till now, laitlie within this half yeir thay have interest them thairin be vertew of thair pretendit testimoniall or decreit, thairfor ordain ae man of law to be employit to attend them, and in respect we have not yet chosin ae man of law sen Mr Thomas Hoip was maid his Majesties advocat, Thairfor think meit a letter be written to Mr James Stewart, advocat, and to Peter Algowr, agent, to attend them, and thairefter with diligence to advyse quhat cours sall be takin be law concerning that pretendit decreit or testimoniall, and the man of law and agent to them. Thay writ to be remberit with gold at the discretioun of the Magistrattis.”

The next minute in the record is of date a week later than the foregoing one and runs thus —“Forasmeikill as the toun of Renfru has intercept them in the taking up of customs at Kilpatrick is to ryd to Edinburgh anent this, and also Grinok’s plea, this burgh being evir in possession of the hail customes in Clyd.”

COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO TRY AND SETTLE  
DISPUTES BETWEEN GLASGOW AND DUM-  
BARTON, &c.

Of date August 14, 1638, "John Sempill intimates the business done at the Conventioun holden at Stirling on the sevint of this instant, Commissionaris of Edinburgh, Dundie, Lynlithgow, and Irvyne, to see gif they can settle the disputes between Glasgow and Dumbarton. The Conventioun hes approvyd the Covenant, and nain to be maid burgess, Counsellar, Magistrat, or Commissioner, nor ony uthir office in ony burgh in tyme couming, bot such as ar within the Covenant."

From the above it is seen that Covenanters when in power became in turn persecutors. Alas for the frailty of poor humanity !

ARRANGEMENT TO BE MADE ANENT ACTION  
BETWEEN DUMBARTON AND GLASGOW.

17 October, 1658—Walter Watson, provost, and Johne Cuninghame, baillie, appointed Commissionaris to go to Inverary to the Marquis of Argyll to "purchas ane letter of recommendation to the Commissioners for the administration of justice anent the action depending betwix this burgh and Glasgow for getting the action called and a quick despatch." The above transaction on the face of it looks a little shady, for both parties, buyer and seller.

On December, 1658, the burgh minutes go on to state that "Johne Cuninghame, baillie, and Johne Smollatt, dean of gild, Commissioners for this burgh, being returned, hes as a pairt of their deligence, producit ane large informatione in writ of the wholl disput of the cause betwix this

burgh and Glasgow, contening sevin pages in folio, By and besyd the former large information sent home thereanent be the said Commissioneris quhilk is put in the charter kist."

The immediately succeeding extract in all probability reveals the nature of the controversy which at this date agitated the two burghs, and helped to still further alienate them from each other.

DUMBARTON MAKES COMPLAINT AGAINST  
GLASGOW.

12 July, 1658, the Convention of royal burghs anent the complaint of Dumbarton against Glasgow that the latter "does cellar thair salt in unfree places to thair prejudice." ordained the Commissioners of Edinburgh, Abirdein, Lynlithgow, Bruntilland, and Irving "to speak with both pairties befor they depairt from the place and to deall to compos the bussienes."

DUMBARTON AGAIN COMPLAINS OF GLASGOW.

In 1659 the records have a minute to this effect, "Anent ane supplicatioun presentit to the saidis Commissioneris be way of missive letter from the burgh of Dumbartane against the burgh of Glasgow, as also be the burgh of Air anent the election of thair Commissioner to attend the parliament of England, that contrair to the ordour of such electiones they had called the voces of thair whole Counsall when they ought to have had but one voice as uther burghis had who payed thair proportionis for the saidis Commissioner his maintenance, and desyring the said matter might be takin to thair consideration, the present Commissioneris haveing

considerit the samyn have recomendit the decession thair of to the nixt generall Conventione of burrowis."

**DISPUTE FOR PRECEDENCE IN RIDING AT  
PARLIAMENT.**

At the sitting of the Convention in 1660, at Edinburgh, "The moderatour having reported that the Comittie for reveising of the Commissiones having considerit the contest betuix the burghis of Glasgow, St Androis, Stirling, and Lithgow for the prioritie in ryding at Parliament, they thought it expedient to try quhither thes burghis would submit the contraversie to thair decisione, and if not, they wold not medle in the bussienes, and the saidis burghis compearand and refusing to submitt, the present Commissioneris ordaines everie one of them to advys with thair respectiue burghis whither they would submit to the burrowis or to bring thair uther legall defences to the nixt meiting of thair generall conventione; as also they continew the lyk controversie betuixt Innernes, Haddingtoun, Coupar, Kirkcaldie, Monros, Anstruther Eister, and Dumfreis to the said nixt generall conventione," held in Edinburgh, in 1663, where "Sir Robert Murray haveing reportit that his grace (Earle of Lauderdale, his Maiesties secretarie) did desyr that the Commissioneris of burrowis nicht condescend vpon ane list of such Commissioneris as they thought nicht be in readienes to ryd at the dissolveing of this Parliament, the present Commissioneris condescendis vpon the list following, viz., Edinburgh, Pearth, Dundie, Abirdein,



Stirling, Linlithgow, St Androis, Glasgow, Air, Haddingtoun, Kirkcaldie, Monros, Coupar, Dumfreis, Innernes, Bruntilland, Jedburgh, Dumfermling, Dumbartan, Elgin, Peibles, Culros, Annan, Gallaway, and Quensferrie, quhairwpon the Commissioneris of Innernes protestis that he nicht be forborne at this tyme, alsweall becaus he wes not provydit with ane foot mantill (shield for the foot) and uther necessaris, as becaus thair is ane controversie betuixt his burgh and Haddingtoun for precedence; lyk as John Bell protestit for precedence with Stirling, Lithgow, and St Androis, and the Commissioneris of burrowis protestit they nicht ryd in thair places at this tyme conforme to vse and vont untill the said controversies (shall be) takin in to serious consideratioun be the whole bodie and legallie decydit."

In the Convention held at Aberdeen, in 1665, it was resolved that "the ninth act of the particular Convention held in December, 1660, as to the contest for priority in riding at Parliaments was to be a head of nixt missive." How the controversy anent precedence ended, if it ended at all, doth not appear in the veracious records of the royal burghs.

COMPLAINT AGAINST RENFREW ANENT  
UNFREEMEN.

On the 3rd September, 1633, John Semple, who had been Commissioner of Dumbarton at the Convention of Royal Burghs, reported—  
"Anent the complaint of this burgh agains the toun of Renfrew for suffering a numbir of unfriemen within thame, to usurp the libbertie of

frie burgesses, The reportir declairs, That in respect the generall clerk had losst the names of the persounis complenit vpon, and that the toun of Renfrew thair diligence producit was not fund relevant, Thairfoire the burrowis hes ordanitt this burgh to send the hail names of the persounis complenit vpoun to the agent of new againe, To the effect the agent may send the same to the toun of Renfrew, quha ar ordanit to raise this vpoun the new act of Parliament againe the said persounis, and caus chairge them thairwith, and gif thaysuspend, to deliver the samyne againe the nixt generall Conventioun, vnder the paine of jc lib."

In 1594 the Convention assembled at the burgh of Stirling, and part of the business they transacted was hearing a complaint of

THE BURGH OF DUMBARTON AGAINST THE  
BURGH OF GLASGOW.

The nature of which is made manifest by the following excerpt from the records of the Convention.

"The sam day, anent the complaynt of the burgh of Dumbartane aganis the burgh of Glasguow, for resaving of vnfriemen and regratouris, and for suffering thame to haif tredd within thair burgh, to the hurt of the preveleges of Dumbartane, the said Commissioners ordanis the said burgh of Dumbartane to preife thair bill and to report to the nixt Conventioun the names of the vnfriemen quhom vpon, thai compleyne, and this to be heid of the nixt missiue." There is no evidence to shew that this complaint cropped up at any subsequent

meeting of the Convention for its consideration, but for all that there is ample proof in the minutes that Complaints were for centuries very rife between these two burghs, sometimes the one and sometimes the other being the complainant.

COMPLAINT OF GLASGOW AGAINST AN IMPOST  
GRANTED TO DUMBARTON.

At the meeting held in Dumbarton in the year 1617 the following resolution was passed :—

“Anent the supplicacione given in be the burgh of Dumbartane, craving licence to impetrat of our Soverane Lord ane gift of ane impost to be takin of everie unfriemans fisching and coper bots yeirlie, fisching and coping (dealing) or that sall happin to fische or cope hering within and on this syde of the Cloch in Clyde and Lewis by and within the Cloch, compeared the Commissioners of the burgh of Glasgow and Ranfraw and alledged that thair burghs and liberties thair of wald be interest (injured) thairby, and thairfor the saids Commissioners of burroues ordeans the saids burghs of Glasgow and Ranfrow to send thair Commissioners sufficiently instructed to the nixt generall convention to ansuer in the said mater with thair richts and securities, as also ordeans ilk burgh to send thair Commissioners sufficientlie instructed to decyde in the said mater.”

The matter was taken up again at the Dunfermline meeting in the subsequent year, 1618, with the following result :—“Anent the 56th act of the last general Convention ordaining the burghs of Glasgow and Renfrew to send thair Commissioners sufficientlie instructit to the nixt

generall Convention of burrowis will proceid and minister iustice as accordis of the law ; and ilk burgh to send their Commissioneris sufficientlie instructit to decyid thairin."

The Convention of 1627 was held in Ayr, and at same the

**FLESHERS OF GLASGOW COMPLAIN AGAINST THE EXACTIONS OF DUMBARTON.**

"The complaint of the flescheouris of the burgh of Glasgow contrare the burgh of Dumbartane for exacting of theme of viij *d.* of custome of ilk kow, ox, meir, or staige (young horse) cuming in threw thair burgh or liberties," continued till the nixt generall Convention.

At the Perth meeting in 1628 "The Commissioner of Glasgow declared that he, in name of the burgh, passed from the complaint against Dumbartane referred to in the 30th Oct. of the last general Conventioun."

**GLASGOW ADVANCES MONEY FOR EXPENSES OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR WESTERN BURGHS (INCLUDING DUMBARTON) AT THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.**

At a particular Convention of Royal Burghs held at Edinburgh in 1655, one of the minutes thereof bears that "The present Commissioneris of burrowis now conveyned, being informed be the Commissioner of the burgh of Glasgow that the said burgh had advanced Maister John Wilkie, thair Commissioner apointed to attend the parliament at Londone, the sowme of ane thousand four hundredth and foir pund Scottis money for his entertainment in attending thair effaires and wtheris burghis joyned with thame

by the Protectour and his Counsall, as thair resait thairvpon will testifie ; and seing the burghis of Air, Irving, Dumbartane, Renfrew, Lanrick, Rothesay, and Rutherglen ar joyned with the said burgh of Glasgow for payment ilk ane of thame thair proportione of the said soume allreadie advanced, and of all vther soumes to be advanced to that effect duiring his attendance at the said parliament conformed to the taxt roll ; and wnderstanding that the saidis burghis above writtin ar deficient in paying thair proportionis of the saidis sowmes of money allreadie advanced be the said burgh of Glasgow, thairfoir they ordained the saidis burghis to mak payment of thair proportionis of the said soume, viz., [Air £183 8s ; Irving £131 ; Dumbartan £78, 12s ; Renfrew £52, 8s ; Lanrick £78 12s ; Rothesay £39, 6s ; Rutherglen £26, 4s].”

SUPPLICATION GIVEN IN BY GLASGOW, DUMBAR-  
TON, ETC., AGAINST UNFREE COUNTRY COOPERS.

This matter was before the Convention held in Glasgow in 1657, and their deliverance thereanent runs thus :—

“Anent the supplicatiounes givin in be the burgh of Glasgow against wnfreet coupairs in clauhanes and wnfreet places for buying of girthis, staves, rungis and wtheris necessaris, duelling in wnfreet places, and making and selling of vnsufficient and small barrellis for transporting of all sort of fisches, to thair great prejudices, the present Commissionaris of burrowis finding that thair ar severall actis of parliamentis discharging the samyn, and especiallie the 141 act par. 6, King James 6 ordaining all barrellis for

everie sort of fisch to be of the qualitie and vnder such markis as is mentioned in the said act, and thairfoir they statut and ordaine that ilk burgh sall report thair diligence in puting of the saidis actis to dew executione within thair boundis by punishing the saidis abussis, wnder the pain of 40 lib. ilk burgh."

A subsequent minute of said Convention is as follows: — "The present Commissionaris of burrowis taking to farder consideratioun the supplication presented to thame be the burghs of Glasgow, Dumbartane, and Ramfrew, anent the prejudice susteanand be thame by wnfree couparis duelling in wnfree places and buying up of all staves, rungis, girthis, and wtheris necessaries, frome wnfree persons vpon the watter of Clyd, contrair to our just richtis and priviledges, but also of the inequalitie of the measuris of barrellis made in thes wnfree places for salting of all sortis of fisches ather transportit out of the nation or sold within the samyn, the saidis Commissionaris not only thinkis it fit that the actis of parliament maid discharging the samyn be put to dew execution, but also ordains that the burghs of Edinburgh, Dundie, Lithgow, Stirling, Haddingtoun, and Bruntilland, who are appointed to attend the Counsell of estait anent wther effaires of the burrowis, to supplicat the Consall of estait for remeid of thes abuissis and to obtean ane ordinance from the said Counsall of estait that all such barrellis made for the transportation of hering, salmond, and whitfische, or of these that ar to be sold within the nation, be onlie maid within free burghis and markit with the dein of gild of the said burgh his mark,

and with the mark of the maker thairof, at both endis of the said barrellis and bungis thairof, conforme to the ordour set down in the 141 act of the 6 par., King James 6, and thes not so markit to be referised ; and ordanis the said act to be put to dew executione be the wholl burrowis."

PEACE CONCLUDED BETWEEN GLASGOW AND  
DUMBARTON, AND THE TERMS THEREOF.

At Edinburgh, in 1700, "The Convention having considered the contract and agreement between Glasgow and Dumbartoun, which these burghs desire to be ratified, they instructed the clerk to record the contract with their ratification, after the dissolving of this Convention." The following is what was ratified :—

"Contract and agreement between the burghs of Glasgow and Dumbarton, dated 12th, 28th, and 29th June, 1700, referred to above.

"In the generall convention of burrowes holdin at the burgh of Edinburgh vpon the nynth day of July, one thousand seven hundred years, the which day the generall conventione of the royall burrowes doe ratifie, approve, and confirme, and by thir presents approves, ratifies, and confirme the contract and agreement past betuixt the burghs of Glasgow and Dumbartoun, wherof the tenor followes : Att Edinburgh, Dumbartoun and Glasgow, the tuelth, tuentie eight, and tuentie nynth dayes of June, jm. vj. years, it is appointed, contracted, and finally ended and agreed betuixt the parties following, to witt [the provost, bailies, dean of guild, deacon convener and



treasurer, with the consent of the Councillors of the burgh of Glasgow, for themselves and the remanent burgesses, deacons of crafts, and communitie of the burgh, on the one part ; and the provost, baillies, dean of guild, and treasurer, with consent of the Councillors of Dumbarton, for themselves and for the remanent burgesses, deacons of crafts, and communitie of the burgh on the other part ;] in maner, forme, and effect following, that is to say :—Forsuameikle as the saids two burghs of Glasgow and Dumbartoun, and representatives thereof, found it mutually prejudiciall to others that of a long tyme bygone ther has not bean that correspondence keeped up betuixt them which would have tended considerably to both thair advantages, and that this hath chiefly arissen from their sewerall pretensions to the priviledges of the river of Clyde, in the prosecutione wherof many differences have fallen out, and at lenth ther was ane actione and cause of declarator first raised and intended before the late pretended Commissioners for administratione of justice to the people of Scotland, (the Commissioners called pretended in the document were those appointed by Protector Oliver Cromwell) at the instance of (Glasgow and against Dumbarton) “and thereafter wakned and insisted vpon befor the lords of Councill and session found and declaired that the saids provost, baillies, Council, and communitie of the burgh of Dumbartoun have no right to exact or uplift from the inhabitants burgessis, and community of the said burgh of Glasgow, nor any veshells and ships belonging to them or fraughted by them arriveing in the said river of Clyde at

the forsaid roads and ports of Pottereig, Inchgreen, and Newark, any anchoradge, measuradge, weyadge, tunnage, dockmeall, cockitts, and other dewes whatsomever, to the said toun of Dumbartoun ; and decerned and ordained the saids provost, baillies, Councill, communitie, burgessis and inhabitants of the said burgh of Dumbartoun, to desist and sease from all trubleing, molesting, or impediment makeing to the persewers, provost, baillies, Councill, burgessis and inhabitants of the said burgh of Glasgow, free of the burden of the forsaid pretendit dewes or any of them to the said burgh of Dumbartoun as parties haveing no right therto, in sua farr as is above found, decerned, and declaired, notwithstanding of their action of declarator pursewed against the said burgh of Glasgow, magistrats, inhabitants and comunitietherof, which, together with the charters, inf-ftments, books of enteries, other rights and depositions of witnessis, adduced be the said burgh of Dumbartoun, as at length therwith considered, and frae whilk by decret of the date of thir presents, the said magistrats, communitie, and inhabitants of the said burgh of Glasgow are fully assoilzied and exonered in maner at length specifiet in the said decret, as the samen of the date at Edinburgh the eight day of Februarij jm. vjc. threescore six years, at more length bears ; notwithstanding of which decret ther haveing sewerall new questions arisen betuixt the saids two burghs anent the extent of their sewerall priviledges, which hes occasioned much animositie and difference, besyds the charges and expenssis therof, for preventing wherof in tyme comeing, and to the

effect ther may be a lasting friendship and dew correspondence inviolably observed betuixt the saids two burghs in all tyme heirafter, therfor the saids provost, baillies, dean of gild, theasurer, and toun Councill of the said burgh of Dumbartoun, for themselves and in name and behalf of and takeing burden upon them as said is, doe by thir presents ratifie, approue, and confirme the forsaid decret of declarator obtained at the instance of the toun of Glasgow, befor the lords of Councill and Session, against the toun of Dumbartoun, in anno jm. vjc. and sixtie six, declairing the priviledges therein decerned to belong to the said toun of Glasgow, as also the forsaid other decret of absolvitor obtained at the instance of the said magistrats and toun of Glasgow against the magistrats and toun of Dumbartoun in the year forsaid, wherby the said toun of Glasgow is assoilzied from the declarator raised against them at the instance of Dumbartoun anent certaine priviledges of the river of Clyde therin mentioned, on the hailleids, articles and claussis thereof, with the possession attained by the said burgh of Glasgow, and their burgessis and inhabitants, by vertew of the saids decreets, wherby they are and have been free of the haille dewties formerly acclamed by the magistrats and burgh of Dumbartoun upon accompt of their ships and veshels loading and livering within the river of Clyde, which dewty and impositions are heirby discharged in all tyme comeing; and the saids magistrats and Toun Councill of Dumbartoun, for themselves and in name and behalf forsaid, doe heirby bind and obleidge them and their suc-

cessors in office that they shall never stop, trouble, or molest the burgessis, inhabitants, and others belonging to the toun of Glasgow in tyme comeing in the peacable possessione of the rights and priviledges decerned in favour of the said burgh of Glasgow by the forsaid decreets and sentances of declarator and absolvitor respective, and the saids magistrats and Toun Councill of Dumbartoun shall not move any actione, place, or question against them theranent, or against their successors in any tyme heirafter ; and sicklyke, the saids provost, baillies, and Councill of the burgh of Dumbartoun, and deacons of crafts, for themselves and in name and behalf of and takeing burden upon them as said is haveing considered whereunto they have right of weyadge, tun<sup>n</sup> nadge, anchoradge, measuradge, dockmeall, cokets, and other dewes, quhatsomever payable to the burgh of Dumbartoun by all stranger ships unloading within the river of Clyde, hath created the said toun of Dumbartoun ane great dale of trouble and vexatione, besyds the expensis in uplifting therof, which most ordinarily exceeded the dewes themselves ; and as also considering that divers and sundrie debats and questions have fallen out betuixt the saids two burghs anent the uplifting of the said dewes, the toun of Glasgow pretending that by vertew of their decreets above mentioned pronounced in their favour that any of the burgessis of Glasgow haveing interest by fraught or otherwayes in these stranger ships did make the samen free of dewties to the burgh of Dumbartoun ; lykeas the said burgh of Dumbartoun being oft tymes

defrauded of the dewties payable by strangers who had no shift or excuse but haveing past speedily out of the river befor ever the said burgh of Dumbartoun was acquainted of their comeing therto ; and farder ane other debate hes frequentlie happened anent the touns offers dew and in use to be payed by all strangers who imported goods and merchandize to the said river Clyde, whereby they stand oblcidged to make the first offer of ther goods and merchandize sua imported by them to the saids two burghs of Glasgow and Dumbartoun, at such a price and rate as the said strangers offerers shall not have power or liberty to undersell the samen to others, and it haveing often happened that both the said burghs were disappointed of the benefites of the saids offers by certaine stratagemes and devyces made by the importers as sometyme by consignatione of the goods imported to some of the burgessis of the saids burghs, thereby simulating to them a right, whereas in effect they had non, but of purpose to defraud the saids burghs of their just rychts, and in the meantyme raising therby ane animosity betuixt the burghs themselves anent the benefites of the said offers, whereof both were disappointed, and it being therfore agreed that not only the dewes payable by the strangers ships who have no interest in the river of Clyde but also the benefite and priviledge of the touns offers should in all tyme comeing solly appertane and belong to the saids magistrats, toun councill, and comunitie of the burgh of Glasgow. Therefore, and for certain other onerous caussis after mentioned, the saids provost, baillies and toun Council of Dumbartoun, for themselves and in

name and behalf of the deacons of crafts and comunitie of the samen burgh, to have sold, assigned, and dispoed from them and their successors in office, lyk as they doe by these presents sell, assigne, and dispoed from them and their forsaid successors, to and in favours of the saids provost, baillies, Councill, and comunity of the said burgh of Glasgow, and their successors, &c., all and haill the saids dewties formerlie payable to the said burgh of Dumbartane, of weyadge, tunnadge, anchorage, measuradge, dockmeill, cokets, and haill other dewties whatsomever dew and payable by all ships, barks, &c., wherof the freemen inhabitants of the said burgh of Dumbartane are not owners or fraughters, and who shall happine to load or unload within the samyn river of Clyde in all time comeing ; and sicklyke all and haill the said burgh of Dumbartoun their share and proportion of any offers dew and made lyable to made by strangers not freemen inhabitants of the said burgh of Dumbartane, who shall import any goods to the said river of Clyde in tyme comeing, with all right, title, interest, property, and possession, alsweel petitor as possessor, whilks the saids magistrats, Council, and communitie of the said burgh of Dumbartane, had, hes, or anywayes may have, clame or pretendin, and to the saids dewties particularlie above wryten and touns offers above mentioned, and to and in favours of the saids provost, baillies, toun councill and comunity of the said burgh of Glasgow, present and to come, whom they have surrogate and heirby surrogats and substituts in their full power, right, title, and place of the premissis for now and ever ;

with full power to the saids provost, baillies, and toun Councill of Glasgow and their successores, for themselves and in name and behalf above wryten, to intromet with, uplift, creave, and receive the saids dewties of weyadge, tunnadge, anchoradge, measuradge, dockmeall, cokets, and other dewes whatsomever, as also the touns offers in sua farr as the samen did formerlie belong to the said burgh of Dumbartane, with the haille profits, priviledges, emoluments, casualties and dewties belonging therto, and if need beis to convene, call, follow, and persew therfor, and to use all dilligence and executione for inbringing of the samen, sicklyke and als freelie in all respects as the saids provost, baillie, and Council of the burgh of Dumbartoun or their predecessors have done or might have done at any time befor the makeing hereof; provyding alwayes that thir presents doe no wayes prejudge the said burgh of Dumbartane as to the freedomes, liberties, and immunities of all ships, barks, boats, etc., belonging to or fraughted by the burgessis and freemen inhabitants of the said burgh within the said river of Clyde notwithstanding of what is above disponed to the said burgh of Glasgow. [Here follows a formal clause of warrandice from fact and deed and procutory of resignation]. And farder it is expresslie agreed betuixt the representatives of the saids two burghs of Glasgow and Dumbartane than in all tyme heirafter the veshells of whatsomever syce or burden belonging to the burgh of Glasgow, Port Glasgow, and haille burgessis and inhabitants therof, that shall happine to come to the harbor of Dumbartane or any other

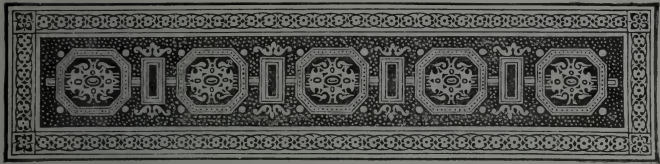


port or harbor belonging to the said burgh, shall have exemptione from and shall not be lyable unto the payment of any dewtie whatsomever to the said burgh of Dumbartane, and in lyke maner hail veshells and boats burgessis, inhabitants of the burgh of Dumbartane, are exeemed from and nowayes lyable in payment of any dewty whatsomever at the said burgh of Glasgow, Broom-of-law, Port Glasgow, or any other port or harbor belonging to them, so that both burghs are heirby declaired free at each others ports in all tyme heirefter ; provyding alwayes, lyk as it is heirby expreslie provyded and declaired that ne'her of the saids two burghs nor their burgessis and inhabitants shall be allowed to collour the veshells belonging to unfreemen under the collour of their oun in any tyme coming. And in respect that the saids provost, baillies, dean of gild and thesaurer of the said burgh of Glasgow have, for and in consideration of the premissis, instant'y paid to the saids provost, baillies, dean of gild and thesaurer of the said burgh of Dumbartoun, to be imployed for the use after specifiet, all and hail the soume of four thousand and five hundreth merks good and usual Scots money, whereof they hold them weel content, satisfied and payed, and discharges the samen for ever, therefore the saids magistrats of the burgh of Dumbartane doe heirby bind and obleidge them, and declair that the forsaid soume shall be applyed by the said burgh of Dumbartane for payment of their burgh's debt, *pro tanto* to the effect it may therby appear that the forsaid transactione is reasonable and onerous, and that the successors in office of both

the saids burghs may have no ground to apprehend that this present contract is proceeded upon frae any collusion of the present magistrats and Councils, but upon fair and just grounds, tending to the benefite and advantage of both the saids burghs." It was lastly provided that the contract was not to take effect till ratified by Parliament.

This paction was broken in the year 1858, by Glasgow. That burgh then got an Act of Parliament passed abolishing the much-cherished privileges of the burgesses of Dumbarton using the harbour of Glasgow without payment of dues. However, existing burgesses were to enjoy their rights during their lifetime, and £5000 sterling was paid to the Corporation of Dumbarton as compensation. This arrangement brought to an end the bitter contentions which had for centuries agitated the respective communities, and inaugurated an era of peace, harmony, and goodwill which is not at all likely to be disturbed.





## Section IV.

### OLLA-PODRIDA.

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THIS mixture is made up of ingredients which principally have been taken from that store-house of good things, the published Records of the Town Council of Dumbarton. To the courtesy of Mr John Irving I am indebted for liberty to make free use of the same, in the way of making excerpts.

#### A RAPSCALLION SABBATH-BREAKING SAILOR.

August 23, 1627, "Fforasmeikle as William Somerville, sayler, servand to Sir William Alexander, knyght, was, at desyre of the said Sir William, for his insolencie and trubill offerit to utheris of his companie, particularlie to Wm. Ramsay and George Ramsay his sone, and raising factionis and sedetionis amangis his companie and sailers committed in ward within the tolbuith on Setterday, the xvij of this instant, and that sensyne, upoune the Sabboth day, in tyme of preiching, he abusit the Sabboth day, being drinking all nyt, He set out scoppis (quart

measures) cuppis, and uther tryffillis at the windo, offering thaim to be sauld to the peopill came from the Kirk, desyiring thaim to by them and sic uthir waires as he had, And that thair-upoun the baillie, John Fallisdaill, cuming to him and desyring him to be quyet or utherwayes go to the chalmer of the said tolbuith, quhere he mycht be keepit mair quyetlie, He not only refusit bot with horribill aiths said thair wos nane braithing durst put him thairin, And the baillie putting hand to him to put him thairin, he offerit to have drawn his daiger, when the said baillie got a grip thairof, and held it, and with grit difficultie got the same fra him efter he had received mony injurious words of the said Wm. The said William being accusit, acknowledgit his said offencis to God and wrang to the said baillie, And declairs he is sorrie for the same, and alledges he was ouercome with drink and not setlit (in his sound mind). Thairfor the baillies, with advyse of the Counsall present, ordaine him to give sattisfactioun to the minister, elders, and sessioun of the kirk of this burgh for his abusing the Sabbath day, and to pay to the kirk box, for the pure (poor), sex pundis Scottis money ; And for his wrang to the baillies to be laid in the stokkis at the Croce, and his burgeschip and freedome of this burgh gifted to him to be cryit doun, and thairefter that he humblie crave pardoun of the baillie for his fault done to him, and inact himselff nevir to offir injurie to ony inhabitant of the burgh in tyme-cuming, under the paine of ane hunderit lib. money, and perpetuall perjurie and defamation, Sua, according thairto, payit the said sex

lib. money to the kirk officer for the pooris box, And actit himself judicially, under the paine of perjury and defamation, nevir to do nor offer injurie or wrang to ony inhabitant of this burgh heirafter, and that under the paine of ane hunderit lib. because he had no man to be cautioner for him." The foregoing shews in a very forcible way the laxness of discipline which obtained of old in the gaol of Dumbarton. It is almost inconceivable that at any period in the history of the town prisoners could be allowed to drink deep all night and sport daggers in the morning, but yet the fact remains that it was so.

#### A BRAWL AT A CHANGE HOUSE.

January 24, 1628—"The quhilk day comperit James Powar, sayller, and complenit upon Taig Morisoun, servitor to Captane Barclaye, and Robert Barclaye, sayller, alledgand, that they come to William Coryuith's hous yesterday, quher he was drinking, and struik him and bled him on his heid, without any offence offerit or dune to him, and referrit the same to the said Taig's aith, quha being sworne, declarit he struik the said James with the schaft of ane axe, but knew not quhidder he bled him thairwith. The said magistrattis finds that the said Taig has committit the bluid, and thairfoir is declarit in the unlaw v. lib. money, Captain Barclaye caution. The said Taig alledgit that the said James Powar miscallit his maister, Captain Barclaye, calling him a knaiff, and that he was not worthy to be a captain, and syklik. That he wisst at God that nothir schip nor salt wattir buir Sir William Alexander aboune, and

that he cared not for him, and offerit to prove the same be the witnesses following:—Comperit, James Buchanan, servitor to the said Sir William, and deponit that he herd the said James saye, that Capitane Barclay hinderit Sir William to pay his men thair waiges, and that he wussit the first companie that sayllit with Sir William sank all to the sea grund. Adam Mure being sworne, deponit that the said Taiges alledgance was trew. The judges decern Powar to lye in the stokkis at the croce during thair wull and pleasur, and to abyd the minister and session for the sklander.”

#### A BOUT AT FISTICUFFS.

March 8, 1628—“Anent the variance fallin out betuix John Buchanane, merchand burgess, and James M’Kew, wryt, It is provin that the said John said he suld aither prove the said James befor his minister ae honest man or knaiff, and that he said to the said John that he sould pay him for it, an he was hangit as his fayther was befor him, and that thairafter the said John straik him certain straiks with his neiff, and the said James straik the said John in lyke mannir.” For this pastime they were each fined in the unlaw of xl. sh., to find caution, and appear before the session for the words used. Thus did the civil and ecclesiastical authorities unite in those rude times to be a terror to the wrong doers, byspoiling them for the benefit of kirk and state.

#### A TREACHEROUS ATTACK.

May 4, 1630--“Walter Buchanan confessit to stryking and wounding Robert M’Ewane with

his quhynger behind his bak, and was decerned in the unlaw of ten lib, also to satisfye the pairtie skaithit be the syht of the proveist and baillies." What a time of sturt and strife this was when to judge by the foregoing incident a sword or hanger seemed to be part and parcel of an ordinary man's ordinary equipment.

**A FIRE-RAISING HIZZIE BANISHED THE BURGH.**

Jany. 1, 1631, "Comperit Mysie M'Farlane, Forasmeikle as be hir negligence, this burgh was tua severall tymes in hazard of burning, and the housses quherin sche was tuik fire, first the laird of M'Farlane's houss, and thairefter Johne Porter's houss, Thairfor the said Mysie actis hirselff niver heireftir to have aither ingill (fire) or candill kendillit in ony hous within this burgh, And alsua to remove out of this burgh, and nevir herefter cum herintill gif the proveist, and baillies, and counsall of this burgh think it expedient, undir the paine of scurgeing and banishment, And to that effect to compeir on Monday nixt in the tolbuith to heir thair will thairanent declarit." Mysie, according to arrangement, put in an appearance before their honours, to hear their will declared, and there she undertook to remove furth the burgh never to return and that under pains and penalties, and because she could not get cautioners for this effect the court inhibit and discharges all and sundry inhabitants from resetting the said Mysie in all time coming or setting any house to her under the pain of "ten pundis money and payment of quhatsumever skaith sall be comittit be hir within this burgh and ordains intimatioun and publication to be maid hereof."



## MALICIOUS ASSAULT.

August 8, 1631—"Forasmeikle as Patrick Colquhoun in Miltoun of Colquhoun, of set purpoiss, maliciouslie on Monday the first August instant, cum behind James Fallisdails officeris bak, having sword and quhynger (a short hanger used as a knife at meals and as a sword at brawls) about him, and ae staff in his hand, and thair, unbeknown to the said James, straik him on his heid with ae staff, to the effusion of his bluid, and that in the hors mercat in the tyme of the fair, Thairfor, seeing it is notour to the proveist, baillies, and counsall, that thair was na particular quarell betuix them, bot only that the said Patrick out of revenge did the saime (he, on a former occasion, requiring to be forcibly put in ward by Fallisdail), Find the action and the wrang dune to them and the burgh, and concluds that redress be sought by law at the touns chargis."

## A COLLIESHANGIE IN BOOTHS.

February 1, 1634—"Forasmeikle as William Makkie cam to Johne Craigies buith, quhere William Colquhoun was, and thair, efter certain words, Colquhoun maid to be at him, but was held bak, when Makkie said, quhat wald thou be at, druken dyvor (bankrupt), I sall put a knyff in thy bellie, quherupoune the quhilk William Colquhoun caist a lytill mell at him, quhilk he gat in John Craigies buith windo, quhilk missit him and hat the lyntill of the buith door ; and thairefter thay enterit into grippis in Makkies buith, Unlawit."

**A LYING LIMMER.**

14 March, 1634, "Margaret Hamilton banist the toun for lying, in sa far as she socht help to buy a murning sheit for her deid bairne, when sche had no bairne deid."

**THE WEST FERRYMEN CAUTIONED.**

12 August, 1634, "The ferriars at the wast braid ferrie of Clyd having ferryit with ae un-sufficient boit, and this day thairby put the proveist and minister of this burgh in hazard of thair lyff, giff God had not brought thaim to schore. Cautioned and actit thaim nevir to repeat the lyk."

**NO IMPECUNIOUS IRISH WANTED.**

22 August, 1634, "A companie of Irische beggars ordered out of the toun."

**WOMEN TAPSTERS OVERCHARGING THE LIEGES.**

28 April, 1635, "Margaret and Agnes Watsoun accusit for transgressing the actis be taking tua shillings (two pence stg.) for the pynt beir and twentie pennies for the pynt aill," about three-halfpence stg., and these were doubtless Scottis pints. Other twelve brewster wives were at same time tried for similar malpractices, of the number of which some pled guilty and other some clung to their oath of innocence, "and these found guilty unlawit, their guidde to be poyndit for the amount."

**A THIEF AND RESETTER PUNISHED.**

26 September, 1636, "The quhilk day, in regard that be the confessioun of Janet Conell, spouse of Donald M'Alpine, tailyeir, sche gave a

silver spoone of Johne Sempills, lait proveist of this burgh, to Margaret Robsoun, spouse to Johne Mitchell (Chapman) in Tounend, for ten shillingis and a lyttill lok meill, Quhilk the said Johne Mitchell confessit he tuik to Edinburgh to sell, and that he could not get the spoone bak nor nathing thairfoir fra the goldsmith, till he had a testimoniall of the lawfulness thairof. And that the said Johne Sempill declairs he wants sevin spoons stollen in the haille, quhereof fyve, ilk ane weyand æ unce, and tua, ilk ane weyand æ unce and a half, or thairby, Johne Mitchell commanded to pay twentie-four pundis (£2 stg.), the worth of the haille sevin spoons."

October 4, 1636, "The aforesaid Janet condemn'd to be scurgit and banisht the toun for the above offence, and for stealing a peiss brown Camlet."

#### SABBATH-BREAKING, AND GIVING THE LIE.

October 15, 1636—"Robert Glen and James Weir, tua young boys, vpon the Sabbath day (the 9th), in tyme of preiching, went into Margaret Porter hir chalmir, in Robert Porterfield's hous, and stoll and tuik out thairof, naine being in the hous but thay, quha oppenit the door, fyftie-seven shillingis and tua pennies, quharof xvij. shillingis iiij. pence was fand on thaim. Thay consent to refund this and the balance of the amount stollen, and for punishment ar orderit to be scurgit till thay bluid, Caution enter'd for future conduct." On the same day, "John M'Kynnie, for giving a lye to the proveist, to be put in the stokkis at the Croce in the tyme of mercat, and afterwards to enter service."

MILLERS, FLESHERS, AND BAKERS, WORKERS OF  
INIQUITY.

7th August, 1637—"The vissitor to the meill mercat being careless, the meill is altogeddir insufficient, being mixed with dust, and in particular with beir meill. Vissitor admonishit."

"The quhilk day, in respect it is regraittit and complenit that the fleishers blawis or warks wind in the scheip as they slay thaim, Thairfor ordaine the baillies to vissit the same ilk mercat day, and to punische the said falt be unlaw or confiscatioun, according to the gravitie of the falt." January 22, 1638—"The baxters unlawit in the sum of fiftie-four sh. for selling of light bread."

## THE MINISTER INSULTED.

April 17, 1638—"Anent the complaint maid be Mr David Elphinstoun, minister of this burgh, againe Johne Jacksoun, alledgeand that yesternyt, he being going in his awn yaird, he heirs a tumult, and thairefter he, the said Johne Jacksoun, says befor God, he wald thraw her nose, mening Walter Williamsounis wife, At thequhilk, he being offendit, said he was not wordie to weir the coat and name of a preicher, that sould sa tak the name of God in vain, and thairefter he came out at the yet quher the said Johne met him, and said he wald be reddie to shrive him and attend on his service, quhairinto he anserit he wischis he myht shrive (to) God, and the said Johne ansrit he saw nothing but rogrie, oppres-sioun, unlaw, and casting out of the servands of God in thir plaices. Johne confessit the first part of the charge, being provoked, but minded

not quhat he said to the minister. Ordered to crave pardon humblie on his kneis, quhilk he did."

**REVILING THE MINISTER.**

16th August, 1679—"It being maid evidentlie appear that John Colquhoune, carpenter, did most barbarouslie revyle Mr Arthur Millar, minister, he being in his deutie reproving the said Johne for his drunkeness, by saying that the said minister was ane liar, ane knäve, and ane rascal, with many expressions not to be named, it is ordained that his freedom be cried doun be tuck of drum, and he putt in the stocks."

**THE TOWN'S BAKER COMPLAINS OF OPPOSITION.**

26th May, 1660—"A supplication given in by Johne Robertsoune, baxter, complaining againe Janet Telfourd and Jean M'Clintock for buying and retailling of wheat bread to his prejudice, the quhilk if it is tollerat, he will be forced to leave the toun, upon which supplication it is concluded that the parties complained against be prohibited from retailling of all bread in future, except on mercat dayes."

**DUMBARTON CRAVES THAT ONLY ONE FORM OF GRAMMAR BE TAUGHT IN ALL THE BURGH SCHOOLS OF THE REALM.**

In the General Assembly or Convention of Royal Burghs, held at Dysart on the 11th day of June, 1593, Dumbarton, through its representative, William Cunynghame, appeared in a highly honourable position, as will be made abundantly plain by the following extract from the records of the Convention of date 15th June, of same year

—“The same day, efter long resonyng vpon the supplicatioun gevin in be the Commissioner of Dumbartane, for ordoure to be tane be the saidis burrowis, that ane only forme of grammer wer vniversally teichit in all the grammer scuiles of the saidis burrowis, the Commissioneris of burrowis ordanis ane lettre to be direct to the ministrie of Edinburgh, and ane vther to the Presbiterie thairof, requeisting of thame to tak ordoure for making and compleitting of the first and secund pairttis of grammer with expeditioun; and gevis full powar and commissioun to Henry Charteris, merchant, burges of Edinburch, to insist thairvpon, and craiwe ansuer thairof, and ordanis ilk burgh to direct thair Commissioneris, fullie instructed to the nixt generall conventioun to ansuer to the said supplicatioun and desyr of Dunbartane concernyng the said only forme of grammer, and this to be rememberit in the missiues.”

“CAESAR” HELPS THE KIRK.

From a Council minute of date November 15th, 1627, we find that the church was betimes indebted to the civil power for carrying out its decrees, and the local authorities became thereby a terror to evil-doers. Here is a sample:—  
“Forsameikell as Jn. Murisoun disobeyit the minister, elders, and sessioun, being chargit to compear befor thame the last tua sessiouns by past, and that thairfoir he was ordanit be the Magistrattis to be poyndit for aught sh. to the Kirk box, and that Johne Thome, officir, conform to the said ordinance poyndit a pay frae him, and that thairupone The said Jn. Murisoun

deforcit him and tuik the pay frae him, and callit him a pultroun, etc. . . . Thairfoir the proveist and baillies declair him in ae unlaw of fyve pundis for the said deforcement, and to crave the said officer's pardoun, and to pay the said viij (8s) to the kirk box, and to compeir befor the sessioun Sunday nixt undir the paine of forty shillings."

#### A DISEASE BREAKS OUT AMONG HORSES.

Upon April 26th, 1628, a disease appears to have prevailed amongst horses in and near the burgh, and the authorities shewed themselves equal to the occasion for one of their minutes bears what follows—"Item that na scabbit hors be sufferit to be pasturit on the mure or on ony uthir common grass of the burgh, but within their own huiss and grass quha aucht the hors, vndir the paine to be manifest to the proveist and baillies, besyds the selling of the scabbit hors fand grassen, and the payment of the skaith to the persounis skaithit and hurt thereby."

#### FLESHERS FOLLOW BASE PRACTICES.

We are inclined to imagine that the times under review were unsophisticated, but that is quite a mistaken notion, for upon the 5th day of October, 1630, it was ordained by the fathers of the town that na beiff nor mutton be blawn, or ony kind of wind wrought therein be ony kind of ingyne. The paternity of that invention must (I opine) be laid upon the father of lies; it is too exquisite a contrivance to have been purely human.



## ERECTION OF QUAY BEGUN.

The date when the erection of the present Quay of Dumbarton was begun is learned from the following minute of date April 23, 1632—  
“Thay have concluidet to caus fill up the Penmouth Venall (Quay Pend) and Johne Buchanan’s yaird als far out as Robert Watsoun’s weir, and to big the foir syde, viz., the weirs neirest the watter without fail, fornent John Buchanan’s yaird and the Penmouth, and to vphald the same to him, and to build the keye als far befoir his weir as thay can get moneys to do it.”

## TAX IMPOSED FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE POOR.

I was always under the impression until the following minute was read by me that the imposition of a rate for the support of the poor was a thing comparatively of yesterday.  
“Jany. 18th, 1636—Forasmeikill as the Magistrattis, the minister and elders of this burgh convenit in this sessioun in the kirk of this burgh on the 14th of this instant, In respect the burgh is trublit be strangers and vnkuth beggars and the pure of this burgh damnified (injured), Thairfor thay thocht it best that the magistrattis sould caus put the acts of Parliament againe abill and sturdie beggars to executioun quhairby vnkuth pure resort to thair own parochins, and the pure of this burgh and parochie be helpit and better maintenit, and to this effect that the magistrattis sould caus set down ane stent roll vpon the inhabitants and burgesses of this burgh for a monthlie contributioun to the poore, to keip them fra begging (stentmasters chosin).

## OH, THE DUSTY MILLER.

Feby. 1st, 1636—"Renge to be maid for trying the meill brocht to mercat whether thair be dust in it or not." Oh the miller, the miller he aye had a bad reputation. "There's aye watter whaur the stirkie droons."

A CONDENSED COPY OF THE LETTER OF DEACONRY  
OF THE HAMMERMEN CORPORATION OF DUM-  
BARTON, OF DATE 6TH MARCH, 1635.

The members of this body who consisted of Wrights, Smiths, Masons, "Sclaters, and Sadlers" being Burgesses and Freemen of the said burgh, craved from the Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors thereof a letter of deaconry which was granted on the date above mentioned, for ane certain sum of money, then paid to the said Burgh and employed to the Common well thereof." This letter was framed in all points in regard to Clauses, Conditions, and Privileges in the same way as was that given aforetime to the Taylors and Cordiners of the town. The document conferred upon the craft consisting of the trades above specified "liberty to them and their Successors, Deacons, and Masters of the said craft, to exercise the liberty, privilege, and freedome of the Choising and Electing of ane Deacon of the Hammermen Craft be themselves yearly before Michalmass, the time of the choiseing and electing of the Majestrates and other officers within the said burgh in all time coming." The reasons assigned by the authorities for this act of grace were, that the inhabitants of the town and those resorting thereto might get their work well and

sufficiently done “by skilfull, learned, and perfect Craftsmen and that the decayed and poor brethren of the Craft be helped and supported out of their box, and further that the Magistrates be better served and attended upon in the conduct of the Common affairs and business of the said burgh.” The rulers of the town with consent and advice of the Craft did “Statute and ordain, that none of the said Craftsmen take an unfreeman or outhen Touns Bairn, to be his apprentice until the Deacon and his assessors be convened and take tryal if any Freeman and Burgess dothe desier there bairn, instructed in that Craft, and if any be so desierous the said Freeman’s Bairn, to be accepted and received Prentice before any Unfreeman or outhen Touns Bairn, upon ane reasonable price, and Prentice fee (these old time worthies were all like minded in regard to the virtue of “Keepin’ their ain fish guts to their ain sea maws”). Item—That Ilk Prentice at his entry to the said Craft if he be ane Unfreeman’s Son, shall pay to the Craft’s Box three pounds Scots mony, and if he be a Burgess Son, only twenty shilling mony of Entress to the said Box to be bestowed to the Common affairs and well of the said Craft and relief and help of the poor decayed brethren thereof.” Then follow enactments anent—Booking of Journeymen, and that none “Set up ane booth in the burgh till he first offer his sey to the Deacon and be found worthie, further that none are to be made free of the Craft until they be made burgesses.” Before setting up a booth or gaining admission as a master of the Craft a certain scale of fees was exacted, ranging

from twenty shillings for the son of a free Craftsman and Burgess of that Craft to twenty marks for a stranger unfreeman's son. No unfreeman was allowed to work for his own profit or to any private Burgess until the Deacon be apprised thereof, and only in the event of his not being able to provide a freeman to execute the job was the proscribed unfreeman entitled to exercise his calling. After sundry other provisions were laid down it was enacted that the municipal rulers "for security consents that thir presents be Insert and Registered in the Common Register of the said Burgh, therein to remain *ad futurum rei memoriam*."

Thanks are due to my worthy old friend, Mr Alex. Brown, Joiner, for the copy of the Hammermen's letter from which the above is extracted.

SCARCITY OF SILVER IN BURGH, HATLESS COUN-  
CILLORS, AND OTHER LOCAL ITEMS.

September 9th, 1640—It was ordained by order of the Committee of Estates of the realm that all the silver wark in the burgh was to be handed over to the authorities for the public use. That was in the troublous times of the first Charles. On Jany. 7th, 1641, John Sempill, Commissioner from this burgh to the Convention of Royal Burghs, was instructed in answer thereto to report to the same "That the silver wark within this burgh is skairs worthie the taking in." Of vessels or ornaments of silver, not to speak of gold, it is evident we at that time had few or none. Of date Oct. 3rd, 1663, the following curious minute appears in the Burgh

Records—"And lykas, in respect that several members of Counsell, has conveyit in Counsell in ane very undecent manner, by coming without hats, thairfore ilk persone that shall come to Counsell without his hat sall pay ane unlaw of sex shillings money, foirsaid *toties quoties*, and ordains this act to be put in executioun in all tyme coming." There is a primitive state of matters for you to ponder over. It appears from the records that the provost, baillies, and treasurer of the burgh were paid an equal sum to what the clerk received, viz., 10 pundis Scots money per annum, but in addition they seemed to have enjoyed themselves with the good things of this life at the expense of the Common good of the burgh, for upon Oct. 10, 1663, this burgh's records declare that "Fourtein lib. fyftein sh. and eight pennies fell to be paid to Cathrine Buchanan for the Magistrate's dinner at the last election."

**DUMBARTON BRIDGE, BOYNE WATER, AND TREATY OF UNION.**

"October 6th, 1685, Provost James Smollett gives in an accompt of His diligence concerning the Bridge. He had been negotiating with toun Councils and Ministers, and had visited mony touns in Lothian, east and west, Dalkeith, Dunbar, Dunse, Dumfries, &c., &c., 270 lib. 2 sh. 10d Scotts spent on the bridge."

22nd July, 1691—The Council upon the occasion of the victory over the Irish rebels at Boyne Water "think it verie fitt that there be ane great bonfyre put on at the Croce, about fyve of the clock in the efternoon, and the bells

to be rung, as the use and custom is in lyke causes. Oct. 4th, 1706—Sir James Smollett is sent to Edinburgh with instructions to oppose the proposed Treaty of Union between Scotland and England, it “being fraught in their opinion with the most dangerous consequences to the civil and sacred interests of the nation.”

**DUMBARTON LOYAL TO THE HOUSE OF  
HANOVER.**

The last entry in the records (as published) of the Dumbarton Town Council, shows that the Dumbartonians were thoroughly attached to the House of Hanover and loyal to the core as witnesseth the minute of May 16th, 1746—“The Magistrates and Council conceive it their duty at this time in the most humble manner to address his Majestie on the success of His arms conducted by his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, who lately obtained a signal victory over the Rebels, and now is marching on (at) the head of that victorious army to suppress such of the rebels as have taken shelter in the remotest corner of the Highlands; and having asked the assistance of Mr James Smollett—who is now present with them—in framing an address to go from the community, which was laid before the Council, and unanimously agreed to without any amendment; the Clerk is appointed to transcribe a fair copy of the address, to be signed by Garshake (town clerk) in name of the Council; and they recommend him to send off the said address to His Grace the Duke of Argyll to be presented by him to his Majesty.”

Tobias Smollett in the most scathing manner in one of his poems, "The Tears of Scotland," did ban Cumberland, and hand the memory of the "Butcher of Culloden," loaded with infamy, down to posterity.

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### THE CRUSADE AGAINST WITCHES.

Witchcraft as a crime was first made punishable in Scotland in the reign of Mary (1563) and her son, James VI. of Scotland, first of England, was a noted witch-finder. He took great delight in questioning old hags anent their dealings, carnal and otherwise, with his Satanic Majesty, and even went the length of superintending the torturing or burning of the poor miserable wretches. When he ascended the English throne the hunt for witches lagged considerably for a brief period. However, as the puritanic spirit got the dominancy more and more in the land, the hatred of the people to the suspects was more and more inflamed until it burst forth most fiercely and consumed from first to last upwards of four thousand people. Strange to say, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, just liberated from the yoke of Rome, became the leaders of the crusade against the tribe of witches, and the clergy were for many years the great witch-finders in this realm, and thus showed to the world the melancholy spectacle of ministers of the gentle, loving Jesus going about in his name doing the devil's work. The General Assembly passed condemnatory acts against witches in 1640, 1643, 1644, 1645, and



1649, and after each successive act was promulgated, the horrible torturings and burnings of suspect witches went on in an even increasing degree, playing such fantastic tricks before high heaven as must have made angels weep and fiends rejoice. The last execution for witchcraft took place at Dornoch in 1722, when an old woman was done to death. During this reign of terror and eclipse of tender pity and compassion, God's work must have been sorely hindered.

Dumbarton, in common with other towns and districts in the land, swelled the awful satanic holocaust, and I now proceed to notice some of those lamentable local contributions, as set forth in the burgh records.

**JANET NEILL AND OTHERS ACCUSED OF  
WITCHCRAFT.**

November 20, 1628, "Convenit at Dunbartan James Hall, proveist, John Fallisdaell and George Bell, baillies of the said burgh, accompanyit with John Sempill of Aikenbar, Thomas Fallisdail, William Colquhoun, George Buchanan, Robert Watsoun, persounis of the Counsall thairof, with Mr William Blair minister of the same, Mr Robert Watsoun, minister at Cardross, and Mr William Stirling, minister at ———, and the schoolmaister of the said burgh.

The quhilk day, In regaird Janet Neill, spouse of William Corruith burgess of this burgh, Is suspect of witchcraft and sindry presumtiounis and dittaye (indictment) gevin up aganis hir, Quherupoun sche being this day convenit and accusit, and finding hir to give no satisfiactioun, Bot obstinate denyall quilk gevis the mair

occasioun of suspicioun, seeing sche denys thynges indifferent of themselfis and circumstances clearly provin, Thairfor They conclud that the said Janet be ferder tryit and examinat and serchit gif sche has the devillis mark on her body quherof sche is insensibill, and for the bettir tryall thairof to cutt and cow hir hair gif neid be.

And siklyk, In regaird thair ar sindrie presumptiounis of witchcraftgevin inagains Marioun M'Lintok, Thairfoire they conclud that sche be lykwayse examinat and gif neid be serchit to see gif sche hes the devillis mark in hir bodie insensibill, and to cut and cow hir hair as they sall think meit for the bettir tryall thairof."

This matter was further expedited on December first of the same year, when there was "Convenit the proveist, baillies, and minister, with Thomas Fallisdail, William Colquhoun, Robert Watsoun, James Smollat, John Porter, William Makkie, Robert Middlemis, John Mitchell, James Gairdener.

The quilk day, anent the desyre and motioun maid be William Corruith to the proveist and baillies for putting his wyff Janet Neill to libertie upoun cautioun to entir hir quhenevir requyrit, quhilk being proponit. Eftir advysment, They conclud that the said Janet Neill be yit keptit still in captivitie till a Commissioun be sent for, and ordanis a Commissioun to be sent for with sik diligence as may be, for putting the said Janet Neill and Marioun M'Lintock to ae tryall and assyze upone the dittay (indictment) gevin in."

## THE WITOHES IN THE TOLBUITH.

December 19, 1628—"The quhilk day be moniest vottis, It is thot expedient that Margaret Hunter and Janet Donald be yet keipit in ward and captivitie Till the first day of Januar nixt, or sooner gif the judgis think it meit, and thair to be brought, vissit, and tryit gif they have ony unsensibill marks (these marks being portions of the body insensibile to pain when pricked) and uitherways tryit as Janet Neill and uthers hes bein tryit, and that a comissioun accordinglie be socht and sent for putting all to tryall, and that againe the VIII. of January nixt to cum."

On January 9th, 1629, "The quhilk day efter advysement with the depositiounis and dittaye againe Janet Neill, Margaret Hunter, and Janet Donald, They think meit, In regard the tolbuith hes not samonie places to conveniene severall pairties to keip Janet Neill, Margaret Hunter, and Janet Donald, quha are suspectit and deleyt for witchcraft, and that Janet Dod hes a young bairne sukkand her breist, That the said Margaret Hunter be lettin out upon caution for hir entrie upoun XXVIIIj hours warning vndir the paine of Vc marks, conditionallie the said Margaret Hunter receives the bairne and caus it to be nurishit till the said Janet be ferder tryit, and concludes the rest be keipit and ferder tryall and information soht."

On February 13th, 1629, the authorities ordaine and concludid that the Thresaurer sall give Robert Glen, notar, ten lib. for his pains in sumoning of the assyze past on Janet Neill, And for to sumound assyzes to pass on Margaret

Hunter and Janet Donald. On the 6th of the September of same year "On the sapplicatioun of Robert Glen, messenger (at arms), They ordaine the Theasurer to give him five merks mair nor the ten lib. allreddie gevin him for sumouning of the assyze that past on the tryall of Janet Neill, Margaret Hunter, and Janet Donald.

Of date November 11th, 1629, it is minuted that "Peter Donald actit him of his own will to tak furth of the tolbuith fra Jannet Donald, hes dochter, Janet Colquhoun's young infant, his dochter, quha was baptisit this day, and put hir to ae uthir nurice. The necesssity for this action is made apparent by the following excerpt of date 27th of same month—"It is concludit that the hail burgesses and inhabitants attend the proveist and remanent Commissionars, and assyst them in the execution of Janet Donald, witche, quhatevir day and tyme, beis appoyntit for hir execution."

#### WITCHES FEE TO THE EXECUTIONER.

Of date March 5, 1631, the following suggestive minute appears in the records which smells of blood—"The quilk day fforasmeikle as David Glen hes bein executioner of the witches that hes bein execute in this burgh as lykwayes that he is ordainit to be carefull to keip uncouth beggars out of this burgh. Thairfoire thay have concludit that he sall have of yeirly feall of comoun guid of the burgh aucht marks money at Whitsonday and Mertimas proportionallie, beginand the first terme for the Martimas terme last, and sua furth during his Thankfull services.'

Thankful services forsooth means the approval of immortal souls being launched into eternity unhoused before their time, and ushered into the presence of their God, possibly unprepared for the great scrutiny of His all-seeing eye, from which the innermost, darkest secrets of the human heart are not hid, but naked and open as the day.

The acts referred to viewed in the light of this enlightened nineteenth century cannot but be pronounced judicial murders, which ought to have brought their instigators and perpetrators to contrition, shame, and confusion of face. The most charitable verdict we can pass upon these old time fathers of the town is, that their spiritual eyes being blinded, they knew not what they did, and that they thought when engaged in their cruel work they were doing God instead of the devil service. A sad exemplification of the depth to which our human nature has fallen, God grant us light in an ever increasing measure to discern good from evil, and to serve him in a more acceptable way than our fathers did.

At the gruesome doings referred to above, where the majesty of the law was vindicated against wretched women, whose chief offence, in all probability, was ugliness, combined with an envenomed tongue, and a degree of cleverness beyond their neighbour's, in the words of a poet called MacArthur, now dead, who dwelt betimes at Bowling—

“ 'Tis said that ere morn had declared it was licht,  
 Some bodies had ta'en up their station ;  
 'Twas then, as it's noo, many thocht sic a sicht

A thing o' great edification,  
Quite the thing for true cultivation.

Frae Endrick's green side, frae the Vale o' the Clyde,  
Frae Balquither, Buchlyvie, and Luss,  
Man, mither, and child, through the hale kintra wide,  
Cam' to swell up the hubbub an' fuss,  
An' the beautiful sicht to discuss.

Frae heich windows aroun' the fine gentry looked doon  
(Ye a' mind that sayin' sae clever,  
That a beautiful thing's mair worth than a croon,  
A joy, a real true joy for ever,  
Jist like the true sun failin' never)—

But noo, frae the bell o' the auld tolbooth clock,  
Rang the note o' the lang-looked for time,  
At whilk ev'ry heart o' the crood gied a knock,  
But I canna weel tell in rough rhyme,  
Nor describe this affair sae sublime !

Oot cam' halbertmen, each wi' three-cocket hat,  
Oot cam' provost an' bailies sae gran' ;  
Then a man in deep black, wi' wig an' gravat—  
'Twas the priest o' the parish, douce man—  
An' he held an' auld wife by the haun.

A queer blear-e'ed carlin, a noted witch wife,  
Condemned for her doin's unceevil ;  
By learned folk condemned noo to pay her puir life  
For traffickin' foul wi' the deevil,  
Deviser o' a' kinds o' evil."





## Section V.

### HISTORY OF THE SMOLLETTS AND TELFER - SMOLLETTS OF BONHILL, AND THE TELFERS OF SCOTSTON AND SYMINGTON.

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In searching the Ancient Records of Dum-barton for material to build up this work it was forcibly impressed upon my mind that the Smollett family had been for several centuries intimately identified with the making of the burgh's history. They were the guides, philosophers, friends, and occasional dictators of the ancient and royal burgh, and left their impress on it for good, therefore their memory deserves to be kept green by its inhabitants. In years more recent the Smolletts have to a considerable extent moulded the destinies of the County in common with the grand old family of the Colquhouns of Colquhoun and Luss, their near neighbours, and consequently I have an additional reason for devoting a few pages of this book to the setting forth of the history of





**CAMERON HOUSE, LOCHLOMOND,**  
Modern Seat of the Smolletts of Bonhill.



**TOBIAS SMOLLETT'S  
MONUMENT,  
RENTON.**



**ALEXANDER SMOLLETT  
FOUNTAIN,  
ALEXANDRIA.**



**CASTLE AND TOWN OF DUMBARTON,**  
As they were when the Smolletts lived in and ruled the Burgh,





the Smolletts of Bonhill and Cameron. This has been, to my thinking, rendered the more desirable by the recent failure of the older line of the family in the death of Patrick Boyle Smollett, and the accession to the family estates of Captain James Drummond Telfer, R.A., his second cousin, descended from Archibald the third, and youngest son of Jane Smollett of Bonhill.

The Telfer Smollett family is a continuation through the female line of the Smolletts, who were for many centuries the most distinguished family in the ancient and royal burgh of Dumbarton. Successive members of the House were merchants, shipowners, lessees of burgh lands, victuallers of the ships of the Scotch royal navy, a few were eminent members of the legal profession and of the profession of arms, and a good many of the number were bailies and provosts of the burgh and representatives of the same in the Convention of Royal Burghs and in Parliament.

One of the family hight Tobias, a worthy Bailie of Dumbarton, fell at the battle of Glenfruin in 1603 while fighting in the contingent which the burgh sent to assist the Colquhouns in warring against the MacGregors.

The Smolletts, as a race, appear to have been shrewd, far-seeing, enterprising reliable men, who had the knack of amassing money and adding house to house and land to land.

Heritable subjects in the county town and several landed properties in its immediate neighbourhood such as Pillanflett, Stoneyflett, Corsflett (now Crosslet), and Over Kirkton, owned them as lords, as did also broad acres in

Cardross, Bonhill, and other places, which invested their possessors with the dignity of being landed gentry of considerable importance.

Laird after laird in the direct or collateral line of male descent followed each other until 1775 when James Smollett died at Edinburgh on 12th November of that year. He was Commissary of Edinburgh, Sheriff-Depute of Dumbartonshire, and a public spirited, learned man, fruitful in good works. He having departed without issue, the next heir had he survived would have been his cousin, Tobias George Smollett, M.D., the eminent novelist, historian, and poet, but he having deceased in 1771 childless the succession fell upon his sister Jane, wife of Alexander Telfer of Scotston (Peeblesshire) and Symington (Lanarkshire), daughter of Archibald, fourth son of Sir James Smollett of Bonhill.

She was an eminently clever, high-spirited woman, whose soul brimmed over with racy, Scotch humour, spiced with keen caustic wit, redolent of those qualities which distinguish the writings of her highly gifted illustrious brother, and these valuable endowments she passed on to several of her descendants, notably to the last holder of the estates, Patrick Boyle Smollett, of pleasant memory. It is related of Mrs Smollett that during her residence in Edinburgh she was visited by a bailie of that city, who was a tallow chandler by trade. On entering she saluted him with "Come awa', bailie, and take a trick at the cards." "Troth, madam, I ha'e nae siller," quo' he. "Then let us play for a pound of candles," said the sister of Tobias.

When Mrs Alexander Telfer entered into pos-

session of the Smollett estates, she once more resumed her maiden name, and after an honoured, useful life entered into rest on December 1st, 1788, leaving offspring, whose descendants are still with us.

As a good deal of misapprehension exists in the public mind regarding the history of the Telfer family, the male source whence sprung the last four lairds of Bonhill, as well as the present owner of that goodly heritage, I proceed to give a rapid *resume* of the same, obtained from most reliable and in part hitherto unpublished sources. Before drawing on these, it may here be stated that the family of Telfer, in common with many of the illustrious families of the land, claims a Norman origin, for doth not chronicles of eld declare Telfer or Telford, to be a surname drawn from Taillefer (Ironcutter), borne by a Norman knight, who landed with the Conqueror, and went in front of the army to the attack of the Saxons, singing chivalrous songs as he gaily threw his sword in the air and caught it dexterously as it fell, then smiting the enemy with it—thus earning for himself a name of renown.

The first of the Telfer family who claims more than a cursory notice at my hands is Alexander Telfer, described as of Kimmergham (Berwickshire), of Scotston (Peebleshire), and of the House of Symington (Lanarkshire), who, in 1739, married Jane Smollett of Bonhill. He, in conjunction with his brother William, in the year 1734, succeeded “The Friendly Mining Society” in the lease of the lead mines at Wanlockhead (Dumfriesshire), and wrought them till the expiry of the lease in 1755.

They raised large quantities of ore for which they obtained goodly prices, and the brothers in the doing of it made money and prospered greatly. During the larger portion of the duration of the lease, Alexander lived at Wanlockhead, in the house which is now, or was until lately, a shooting box of the Duke of Buccleuch.

In 1749 the flourishing lessee of the lead mines bought the pretty little estate of Scotston, Peeblesshire, for £2062 6s 8d, and in its mansion house he, in 1755, received a visit from his distinguished brother-in-law, Tobias Smollett, who, during his residence in that sequestered place, wrote his novel of "Humphrey Clinker."

At the period of the eminent novelist's visit to his dearest relations at their hospitable abode in the upper part of Peeblesshire, the household, in addition to Mrs Telfer and her husband, was composed of their young children and Mrs Archibald Smollett, the novelist's mother, who, since her daughter's marriage, sixteen years before, had continued to be a component part of the thriving family, and had been of considerable service to it in the way of assisting the *mater familias* in the rearing of her progeny. In regard to the unheralded arrival of the illustrious Tobias at the residence of his nearest relatives, I will press into my service Dr Robert Chambers' description of the same as contained in his life of Tobias Smollett :—

"We must now imagine Mrs Smollett in her accustomed parlour seat, when the arrival of a gentleman-stranger is announced. Mrs Telfer sees him first, greets him as her long absent brother Tobias, and quickly introduces him to

the parlour, where the old lady is seated ; working (no Scotsman can doubt) at her stocking. He proves to be a tall, handsome but grave-looking man, and the old lady is informed that he is from the West Indies, where he had been intimately acquainted with her son. She brightens up at this intelligence, and casts a wild eager look towards the stranger. He tries to fix his features in a sort of frown, the better to prevent recognition, but it is no easy matter before those eager eyes. He relaxes into a smile and it is all over. The old lady sprung from her chair, and threw herself into his arms, crying—  
‘My son, my son ! I have found you at last ! Your old roguish smile betrayed you at once.’  
This scene stamps as classic ground the Peebleshire mansion in which it took place. Alexander Telfer, after a useful successful life in which he displayed many manly qualities, died at Edinburgh on May 18th, 1760, leaving three sons and one daughter, immortalised by her notable uncle, Tobias Smollett, in his verses to the memory of an amiable young lady, who died at Edinburgh May 20th, 1771.”

The sons of Alexander Telfer were—(1) Alexander (who succeeded to the estate of Bonhill on his mother’s demise) was married to Cecilia, daughter of John Renton, Esq. of Blackadder, and niece of the Earl of Eglinton, whose maiden name was bestowed on the “bleaching village,” Renton, reared on the family property on the Leven side. His mother having in 1775 succeeded to the family estates upon the death of her cousin, James Smollett of Bonhill, she resumed her maiden name, which was

assumèd by her eldest son on his inheriting those estates at her death on December 1st, 1788, when, in addition to his own paternal acres, he also came into possession of a large sum of money deposited in the Edinburgh bank. Extravagance and faulty management ere many years had fled resulted in the compulsory sale of all his unentailed property, notwithstanding which sacrifices he died pecuniarily much involved at Edinburgh, February 8th, 1799. He was interred beneath the family pew in Dumbarton Church. About fifteen years ago I saw the mortal remains of the dead Smolletts exposed when the church was being remodelled. There was also a tombstone come upon inscribed to the memory of James Smollett who died young in 1698. Had he lived he would have heired the family estate. I caused the bones of the lad to be carefully collected and reinterred under the east wall of the kirkyard, on which the memorial stone is now securely placed. Alexander Telfer Smollett left four sons and one daughter. (2) James Telfer, major in the second (Royal North British) regiment of Dragoons, died unmarried March 27th, 1791, at Symington Lodge, which he had built, and was buried close by at a spot chosen by himself. (3) Archibald Telfer, of the Buccleuch Fencibles, died early in life, leaving two sons and two daughters.

The laird of Bonhill by his extravagancies and mismanagement left his immediate descendants badly crippled financially. However, the estate by about the middle of the nineteenth century on account of judicious management, the great

development of the local turkey red dyeing and calico printing industries and the consequent extensive feuing of the lands of Bonhill became immensely increased in value, and put the Smolletts once again into a flourishing monetary condition. The last laird, P. B. Smollett, besides the estate, left large money to blood relations.

The four sons and one daughter of first Alexander (Telfer) Smollett were—(1) Alexander Smollett, Lieut.-Colonel and M.P. for the county of Dumbarton. An officer in the Guards on the staff of General D'Oyley, he was killed whilst reconnoitering the enemy August 27th, 1799, and was mentioned in Sir Robert Abercromby's despatch dated Helder, August 28th, 1799. He was never married. The village of Alexandria was named after him. (2) John Smollett entered the Royal Navy and attained the rank of Admiral, dying in 1842. He was engaged in Lord Howe's action, June 1st, 1794, served in Lord Nelson's fleet off Toulon, and was at the surrender of the Cape of Good Hope. On his first marriage to the daughter and heiress of William Rouett, Esq. of Auchendennan, Dumbartonshire, he took the name of Rouett. By his second marriage Admiral Smollett left by his wife, Elizabeth, second daughter of the Hon. Patrick Boyle, two sons and five daughters (all of whom died without issue). The two sons were Alexander and Patrick Boyle Smollett, who in succession held the estate. The latter dying in 1895, the estate by his will went to his near relation, Captain James Drummond Telfer, as noticed further on. (3) Tobias Smollett, captain in the 78th regiment, was doing duty in the



treaches at the reduction of Delhi when he was struck by a *sherokee* wind, and becoming paralysed was invalided and died at Edinburgh. He was never married. (4) James Smollett, an officer on board of the "Phoenix," East India-man, met his death in May, 1796, when on a passage to Barbadoes, being accidentally shot by a bosom friend. (5) Susau Smollett was married to a brother of Councillor Pigott, after whose death she became the wife of Mr Nagle, an Irish gentleman of property.

The two sons and two daughters of Archibald Telfer (3) were — (a) John Alexander Telfer, who became a captain in the navy of the H.E.I.C.S., and died without issue in 1860. (b) Buchan Fraser Telfer (whose baptismal names, so novel in the family of Telfer of Lanarkshire, were given to him by his god-parents, the Earl of Buchan and Margaret Fraser, daughter of William Fraser, Esq. of Fraserfield, Countess of Buchan) retired with the rank of Deputy-Commissary General after having seen much war service. He was in Lord Cathcart's expedition to the Baltic in 1807, and was present at the siege of Copenhagen, accompanied Sir John Moore to Sweden in 1808, thence under the same commander to Portugal, returning to England after Corunna. He was in garrison near London during the Burdett riots, after which he was ordered to the Mediterranean where, whilst in Sicily, he joined Lord Bentinck's expedition to Genoa. He died in 1860. (c) Jane was the wife of Mr Patrick Nagle, an Irish gentleman of independent means. She died in 1850. (d) Cecilia Archibald was

married to James Drummond, Baron of Concraig, Commissary General, whose last service was as one of the two Commissioners on the part of the British Government for settling the claims on France by the European Powers. Both Mr and Mrs Drummond died in 1842.

(b) Buchan Fraser Telfer had nine sons and one daughter, most of whom have passed away leaving issue. His fifth son, James Drummond Telfer, formerly a captain in the Royal Artillery, succeeded to the estates of Bonhill and Cameron on the death of his kinsman, the late Patrick Boyle Smollett (died 1895), and has assumed the name of Smollett in addition to that of Telfer. Has one son Charles Edward Drummond, major in the army, who is heir apparent to the estates of Bonhill and Cameron. Major Telfer Smollett is a barrister of the Inner Temple.

It may be interesting to some of my readers to learn that Captain John Buchan Telfer, R.N., F.S.A., F.R.G.S., an author of considerable note, and a younger brother of the laird of Bonhill, is at present engaged in writing the history of the Taillefers of Lanarkshire, and in his competent hands their memorials are sure to get full justice done to them.

Arms of Taillefer (Telfer) of Harecleugh—Ermine, a chevron gules. Crest, the trunk of an oak tree, sprouting forth young branches, p.p.r.

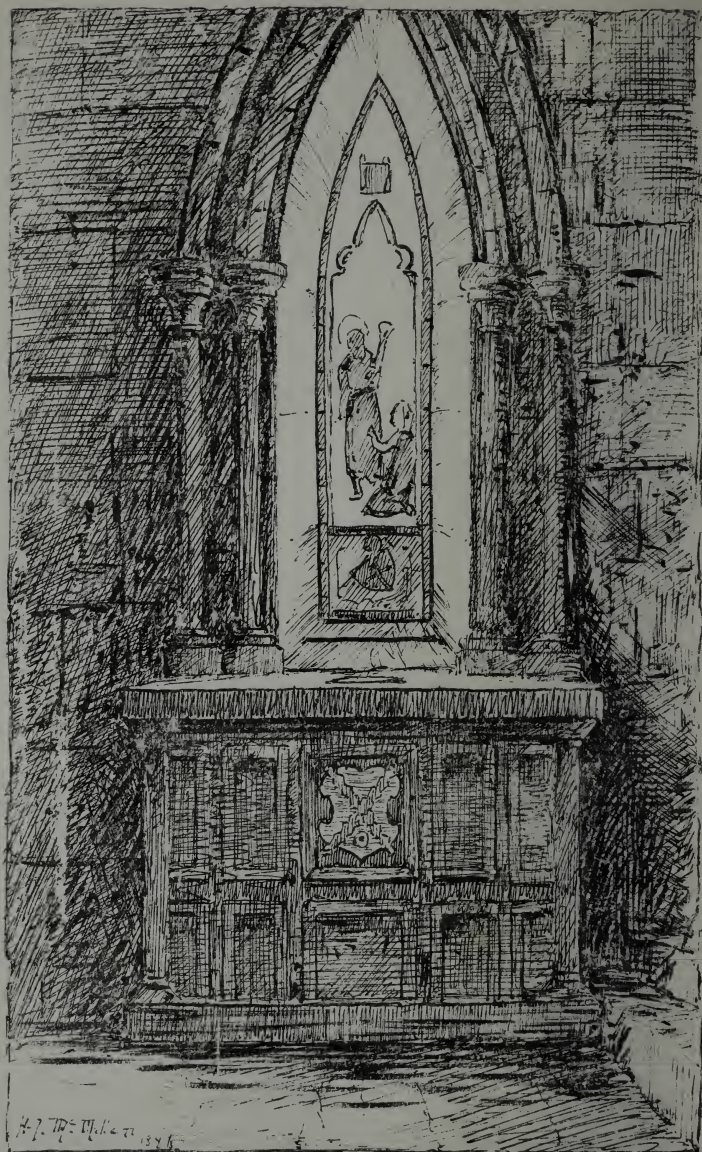
Arms of Smollett of Bonhill—Az. a bend or, between a lion rampant, p.p.r., holding in his hand a banner, arg., and a bugle horn, also p.p.r. Crest—An oak tree p.p.r. Motto—"Viresco."



Ancient Records of Glasgow.







**CRYPT OF GLASGOW CATHEDRAL,**  
SHewing TOMB OF THE COLQUHOUNS OF COLQUHOUN,  
AND WINDOW ERECTED BY JAMES BURNS OF KILMAHEW IN MEMORY OF  
HIS WIFE, MARGARET SHORTRIDGE, WHO DIED 6TH MARCH, 1860.

Ancient Records  
of  
Glasgow.

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*Compiled, Arranged, Elucidated, and in Part  
Written by*

**Donald MacLeod,**

Author of "The Castle and Town of Dumbarton," &c.

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*Illustrations by Hamilton J. MacMillan.*

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GLASGOW :  
BRYCE, MURRAY & CO., LTD., 129 BUCHANAN STREET.  
DUMBARTON :  
BENNETT & THOMSON, "HERALD" OFFICE.







This Work

IS DEDICATED

TO

John Arc, LL.D., D.L.,

ESQUIRE OF CAIRNDHU,

EX-LORD PROVOST OF GLASGOW,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF

THE AUTHOR'S HIGH ESTIMATE OF THE

ADMIRABLE SERVICE HE RENDERED TO HIS NATIVE CITY

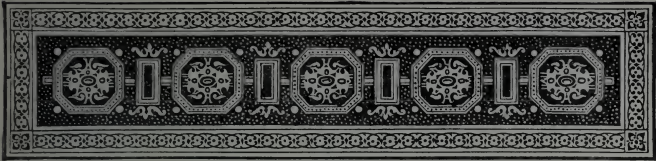
DURING THE SEVEN AND TWENTY YEARS

HE WAS CONTINUOUSLY A MEMBER OF ITS TOWN COUNCIL,

AND ALSO

AS A MARK OF PERSONAL ESTEEM.





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# Ancient Records of Glasgow.

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*Compiled, Arranged, Elucidated, and in Part  
Written by DONALD MACLEOD.*

(Author of "The Castle and Town of Dumbarton," &c.)

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## Section I.

### MISCELLANEOUS EXCERPTS FROM SIXTEENTH CENTURY RECORDS.

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HAVING during the course of a good many years become the possessor of a set of the "Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs" numbering five quarto volumes, embracing in their ponderous bulk, memorials of the Scotch burghs royal, dating from the year 1295 to 1738 inclusive. The volumes alluded to were prepared for the press by Sir James D. Marwick, LL.D., now town clerk of Glasgow, but at the date of the publication of the first and second books of the series was town clerk of Edinburgh.

The completed work is a monument to Sir James' extreme patience and intelligent skill in the deciphering of ancient, musty documents which, to the ordinary reader, are as a sealed book, giving forth no certain or uncertain sound, chaos and old night covering them with a pall of almost inscrutable darkness.

However, under the potent open sesame of Sir James the darkness dispelled, and the modern Scot can now with undimmed vision learn what a battling against untoward circumstances his forefathers had, as they laid the foundations broad and deep of the national prosperity which now obtains so happily over the length and breadth of the land, placing it in many respects in the forefront of all nations.

I would here publicly thank the learned town clerk of Glasgow for graciously granting me liberty to draw from the ample stores contained in the work adverted to whatever material I found to be necessary for the upbuilding of this humble work of mine.

I have throughout the composition given here and there elucidatory matter of my own and translated very old Scotch terms, where I considered the same necessary for the proper understanding of the subjects under review, and thereby redeemed what follows from being a mere compilation and nothing more.

These brief preludery remarks over I now present my gleanings from the chronicles of old anent old Glasgow to my readers, in the good hope and expectation that they will be pronounced by them to be good and much to be desired for mental pabulum. Should that fondly

desiderated result be achieved, it will cause joy and gladness to fill the heart of their humble servant the author or compiler of this booklet.

#### THE KIRK OF GLASGOW NEEDS REPAIRING.

At the Convention of Royal Burghs held at Air, 1583, anent the support craveit be the burrow of Glesgow for the repairing of the Kirk of Glesgow, continewis the ansuer geving thairto to thair next Conventioun, and ordanis the saymin to be rememberit in their missives in maner abouewrittin.

#### SCARCITY OF TYMMER IN GLASGOW.

At the Convention held in Linlithgow in 1584, dew consideratioun being had of the laitt act of Parliament publeshitt at the mercat croce of Edinburgh, and vther places neidfull, anent the pakking and pailing of herring, quhyte fische, and vther fische mentionat thairintill, slain be the inhabitants of ather sydis of the watter of Forth, upon the occasion of complayntt gevin in thairanentt be dyueris borrowis of the coist sydes. Fyndis the said actt gude in all poyntis, except that pairtt thairof being ane special chairge that all fisches and herring and vther fisches contenit to be brochtt to the pointis of Leith or Craill, thair to be graithit and handlitt in maner as is mentionett in the said actt, all in one (voce) consentis ane generall supplication be gevin in all thair names desyring reformatioun of that pairtt of the said act, becaus they vnderstand preiudice to dyueris vtheris frie burrowis to ensew thairvpon, and that it may be lesum to bring the saidis merchandise to all and quhat-



sumever frie portis within this realme, thair alwayis they obeying and obtempering all the remanent poyntis of the said act ; provyding alwayis that ilk burgh vpon the coist sydis fynd dew cautioun to the burgh of Edinburgh for pakking and peilling of sufficient herring and vther fisches foirsaidis, and for fulfilling of all vther heidis contenit in the said act and lettres raisitt thairupon, vnder the paynis thairin contenitt ; as alsua thatt, in the supplicatioun to be presented and gevin in to the nixtt parliamentt, it salbe cravitt that the burrowis of Glasqu, Air, Irrowyne, and vther burrowis be west Clyde, be nocht subiect to that pairtt of the act concerning the taking or vsing of the iedge (gauge) from Edinburgh, in respect of the laik of tymmer amangis thame, they alwayis submittand thame to all the remanent poynts of the said act as is aboue expremett (expressed).

**GLASQU TO BE ANSUERABLE FOR THE UNLAWS OF  
THE WESTERN BURGHS.**

The Commissioners of burrowis presentlie assembled at Aberdeen in 1580, hes found and fynds everie ane of the tounis and burrowis following to have incurrit the soume of twenty pundis ilk burgh, for the paine of their unlaw for non compearance to this present Conventioun as thay quha was lawfully varint thairto, according to the act maid in the last Conventioun of burrowis at Glasqu, in Februar last bypast, viz., Striveling, Dumbartoun, Renfrew, Rugline, Air, Irowine, Kirkcudbrycht, Wigtoun, Laneark, Jedburgh, Peiblis, Craill, Forfar, Breichan, Elgyne, Forres, Nairn, Dysartt, Kirkcaldy, and

Pettinweme ; and for vptaking of the saidis vnlawis, ordanis Edinburgh to rais letteris for poynding thairfor, and to send the saidis letteris to Glasqu and Abirdene for putting of the samyn to dew executioun in the west and north partis of this realme—Edinburgh to be ansuerabill for the vnlawis of the burrowis absent of the south cuntrie, Glasqu of the west, and Abirdene for the haill burrowis be north the same at the nixt conventioun of burrowis.

FITTING OUT SHIP AND BARK FOR SUPPRESSION  
OF PIRACY.

At the Convention of Royal Burghs holden at Dondy in 1587 full powers were given to the burrowis of Edinburgh, Perth, and Dondy to appoyntt and aggre in thair names with Alane Lentroun in Sanct Androis, for outraking of ane schip for suppressing of the pirattis haning in this firth, and vther pairttis betuix Yarmouth, Orknay, or Schyteland for the soume of ane thousand merkis, quhair of the saidis haill burrowis obleissis thame to releve the saidis thre burrowis of the said principall some and intres, gif ony be payit to sic as aduancis the samyn thairfoir. And becaus the Commissioneris of the burrowis of the west cuntry, sic as Glasqu, Irrowyne, Air, Dumbartan, and vtheris salhappin to haif ado for outredding of ane schip and bark ather for occasion of piracy presentlie committit or to be committit, the saidis haill burrowis obleissis thame to releve the saidis west burrowis, or ony of them outredding of the said schip (and) bark of sic somes as they salhappin to deburs to that effectt, provyding the samyn exceid nocht the

soomes aduancitt to the outred of the said Alane Lentroun and his bark.

**GLASGOW REFUSES TO PAY ITS PART FOR FITTING  
OUT ALANE LENTROUN'S SCHIP AND BARK FOR  
REPRESSING OF PIRATTS, AND ITS REASON FOR  
SO DOING.**

At the Convention of Royal Burghs haldin at Glasgow in 1588 exception was taken for various reasons by certain burghs, including Glasgow, to the payment of their share of taxation to pay the interest due at Whitsunday last in connection with the outfitting of Alane Lentroun's ship and bark. "These dissassented alluterlie (wholly) becaus the personis votaris aboue expremitt, alleging that the said hail interes suld be raisitt vpon the burrowis dissassenting, allegitt nocht making paymentt of thair pairtis of the said extentt, and that the haif for thair awin relief of the samyn maid and sett doun the conclusioun aboue expremitt (expressed)."

That there were good grounds for the fitting out of a ship or ships for the suppression of piracy on the high seas in this quarter about this period will be made manifest by the following quotation from the records of Dumbarton :—"Sixteen day of August, 1630, the quhilk day. Fforasmeikle as thay pirattis taine be my Lord Sempill, be the direction of his Majesties counsall, ar to cum to this burgh from Paslaye, and that the Erll of Lynlythgow, lord admiral deput, is to put them heir to triall, and hes written to the proveist and baillies to receave them in ward, Thairfoir it is concludit they be receavit and put within the tolbuith of the said burgh. And for that effect it is ordanit that the burgesses and inhabitants

of the burgh, as they sall be warnit be the officers, attend the proveist and baillies In thair best equippage and armor, to gaird the tolbuith the tyme the admiral is in judgeing the saids persounis. And syklyk, That the said pirattis be watchit nytlie and lokkit in the said tolbuith, and thay to watche about and without the tolbuith in thair armor, fra aucht hours at nyt till sex hors in the morning, and that there be twenty nytlie on the watche, and to that effect ordaine the toun to be devydit in four quarters and quhuevir beis absent, being warnit, to pay fourtie shillings of unlaw, toties quoties." The records are silent anent what punishment, if any, was awarded the captured pirates.

**LANARK MAKES COMPLAINT AGAINST GLASGOW  
REGARDING CERTAIN IMPOSTS.**

At the Convention of Royal Burghs held at Kirkcaldie in 1592 "Anent the Complent giffen be the Commissionar of Lenerk aganis the burch of Glesquo vplifting of the nichtbouris thairof of ane ladil-full of ilk laid of victuall, and ane neif-full of ewirrie wecht of woll or ane fleische of the pak, ordanis the Commissionaris of the said burch of Glesquo to send thair Commissionar fullie instructit to ansuer to the said complent at the nixt generall Conventioun of burrowis, and the samyn to be remimberit in missiwis."

In the following year the matter was again before the Convention when "bayth the saidis pairteis compeirand be thair Commissioneris, and the defendar denyand the vptaking of the said fleice, thairfoir, and of his consent, the saidis Commissionaris of burrowis decernis the said

burgh of Glasquow to decist and ceis fra all vptaking of the said fleice in all tyme cuming, and continewis, of consent of pairteis, the rest of the said comp'aynt to the nixt Conventioun generall, according to the tennour of the last act, ordanying thame to produce and allege the saidis rychtis and resounis, the same tyme, vnder the pane of xx libris, and this to be rememberit in the missiues."

This controversy was settled at the subsequent Convention which was held at Edinburgh. The deliverance was to the following effect—"Anent the Complaynt of Lanerk aganis Glasquow for vplifting ane ladillfull of euery laid victuall, and ane neiffull of ilk wecht of woll specifeit in the said missiue and——act of the last Conventioun, the Commissionaris of bayth the said burrowis being present, Maister Henry Gibsoun, Commissionar of Glasquow, producit ane decreitt of the Lords of Counsall and Sessioun, be the quhilk it is fund that the said burgh hes guid rycht to vplift the said laidillfull of ilk laid victuall, and thairfore the said Commissioners of burrowis assolzies thame simpliciter fra that pairt of the said complaynt ; and as to the rest he producet his allegeance writt, bering in effect that the said hes been [in] vse and possessioun of vptaking and resaving of the said neiffull of woll without trubill or impediment past memoure of man, as the said allegeance, delyuerit to him agane, at lenth beyris ; quhilk the said burrowis fynds relevant and thairfore admittes the samyn to his probatioun and hes assignet to him the——day of——in thair nixt generall Conventioun, for preving thairof *partibus apud acta citates.*"

## THE BURGESSES OF ROTHESAY TO BE APPREHENDED AND THAIR GUDIS.

At the Convention held in Kirkcaldie in 1592 among other important business transacted there was the following—"Forasmeikle as the agent of burrowis, hes complenit vpon the burch of Rothesay that thay nather mak payment of thair extentis (taxes) nor vnlaws (fines) nor keipis conventiouns, as vtheris burrowis dois, and thairfore ordanis that the burrowis of Air, Vrwing, Glesquow, and Dumbartane sall apprehend the saidis burgessis of Rothesay, thair gudis and geir, fens (open a court of law) and arrest the samin vnto the tyme thai find sufficient cawtion to content and pay to the agent and collectouris quhatsumever by gane stentis (taxes), vnlawis, quhairto the saidis hail assemble grantis to the saidis four burrowis full power and commissioun, and nocht to esteme nor vuse the saidis burgessis as friemen; and the saidis burrowis to be ansuerable vpon thair diligence heiroff, vnder sic panis as sall be imposit aganis thame be the burrowis; and in the mentyme, that the said burch of Rothesay be adverteissit to compeir in Edinburgh be thair Commissionar, the tuentie day of September nixt, befor the prowest, bailleis, Counsall, and vtheris Commissionaris appunctit to convene thair the said day, for making compt, rekning, and payment of thair saidis extentis and vnlaws, and to ansuer for nocht keping cenventiounis, with expres commissioun, that, in cais the said burgh of Rothesay, at the said Conventioun appoynted to be halden at Edinburgh, compeir nocht, to incur the vnlawis foirsaidis, and ordanis thair clark to

subscryve ane seueir missive to be sentt to the said burgh of Rothesay to this effect, etc." The records are silent in regard to the outcome of this procedure.

#### GLASGOW CONSIDERS ITSELF AGGRIEVED BY AYR.

At the same Convention that the above potential deliverance was given birth to, consideration was also given "Anent the supplicatioun giffen in be the burgh of Glesquow aganis the burch of Air, for vptaking of greitter dewties grantit to thame for vpholding of thair brig nor is contenit in thair gift, ordanis the saidis burchis to send thair Commissionaris fullie instructit with thair richtis, specialiie the said burch of Air, to produce thair gift of the said impost, that the samin may be tryit and considerit be the said burrowis, and to be rememberit in missiwis."

In 1593 the Commissioner of the burgh of Ayr produced before the Convention of Royal Burghs the gift of the duties under the Privy Seal the levying of which was objected to by Glasgow, but as the Convention desiderated the production of further papers bearing on the subject which the Commissioner of Ayr refused to produce, the Convention "suspendis all warrand quhilk he can pretend of the burrowis, and ordanit thair agent to concure with the pairtie complenar in obtenyng suspentioun of his gift, and for annulling thairof in the nixt parliament, and that the Commissionaris of burrowis to be direct to the parliament be rememberit of the same be the agent."



## GLASGOW UNLAWED TIME AFTER TIME.

In Edinburgh, 1593, the Convention “for gude and resonable causeis moveing thame, dischairgis all executioun of the lettres raisit for the vnlawing of the burghis of Perth, Sanctandris, Glasquow, and Striveling, for non compearance at Edinburgh the xx day of September last, for taking ordour with the Conservatour, (he who was appointed to watch over Scottish merchants’ interests in the Netherlands) the saidis burrowis payand to James Winrhame, thair agent, agane the expensis deburseit in raising and executing of the saidis lettres, according to the said James’ conscience.”

In 1596 the Convention sat in Aberdeen and transacted the following, among other business : “Anent the sax act of the last Conventioun concerneing the rowpping and setting of comoun guidis, and ryiding of marcheis, fyndis the Commissioneris presentlie convenit, exceptand as followis, to have schawin and producit thair sufficient delegece thairvpon in writt, and fyndis the Commissioneris of Glasquow, Sanctandrvis, Craill, Haddingtoun, and Forfar, na vaysis to haue sateffeit the tennour of the said act, and thairfoir decerns thame, and everie ane of thame, in ane vnlaw of xx li., to be payit to thair agent and vplifted be him, and he to be chairgit therewith in his comptis ; and ordains thame, yit as of before, to produce at the nixt Conventioun thair exact delegece in writt in observing the said act, and the lyk to be done be the burrowis absent at this Conventioun under the pane contenit in the said act ; and this to be ane heid of thair missiueis. In the year 1599 the city is



again unlaed by the Convention which met at Edinburgh, who in their minutes “ findis the burgh of Glasgow to have incurrit the pane and vnlaw of twenty pundis for absence fra this present Conventioun being lauchfulle warneit thairto, quhilk thai ordain to be payit to James Wynrahame, thair agent, quhairwith he is to be chairgit in his comptis.”

At Perth, in 1604, the Convention “ decernis the brughis of Glasgow and Air, ilk ane, in ane vnlaw of xx li., becaus, thai being present, refuissit to subscriue the buik and schew nor caus in the contrair, bot depairtit furth.”

At the Arbrothock meeting, in 1612, it was found that Glasgow had not paid its proportion of the sum of money disbursed in connection with the sending of Commissioners to England, and Glasgow and the other defaulting burghs, “ quha hes not payit the samin, and thairfor (the Commissioners) decernes thame and everie ane of thame in the penaltie of fourty pounds, to be payit to the burgh of Ediuburgh, quha advancit the said monye. And anent the twelf hundredth li. superexpendet, the saids, Commissioners of Burrowes, has agreit and consentit, and be thir presents binds and oblesis thair saids burghs and magistrats thairof, to thankfullie content and pay the samin, every ane of thame for thair awin pairts, to the agent of the burrowes in the Commissioners’ names, and to the behoof of the saids Commissioners, according to the stent roll, betwix this and the feist and terme of Mairtemes nixt to cum, but (without) langer delay, together with the soum of fourtie pundis ilk burgh in name of expenses,

damage, and interest, liquidat and agreit vpon in caise of failzie. And ordeans the agent to caus rais lettres of horning vpon ane sempell chairge of thrie dayes allenerlie agains the saids burrowes quha hes not payit thair pairt, and in caise of non-thankfull payment of the said twelf hundreth pundis at the feist of Martimes they have agreit and consentit that lettres of horning be direct at the instanse of the agent agains the burrowes failzand in payment thairof and of the the liquidat expenses of fourtie pund forsaid; and the agent his dischairge to be ane sufficient relief to the payers."

In 1614, at the convention held in Kirkcaldy, it appears by the minutes of their meetings that the burgh of Glasgow was again in the black list along with other nine, and these, each and severally were fined in an unlaw of twenty pounds for delaying payment of the sums due, and the sum of forty pounds was to be exacted if they failed to satisfy the claims against them at the convention in 1615. Siller seems to have been woefully scarce in the now second city in those far back times.

#### GLASGOW ORDAINED TO FORM A GUILDRY.

The 1595 Convention, at one of its diets, "Ordanis ane missiue to be direct to the prouest, bailleis, and Counsall of Glasquow in name of the hail burrowis, schawand that the saidis burrowis is nocht a litill offendit that thai conforme nocht themselfiss to the comlie ordour of vther freburrowis in haifing ane deyne of gild and electing of gild brether and thairfoir desyryng thame to send tua Commissioneris, for the

merchandis and tua for the craftis to compeir at Edinbrugh the first day of August nixt before the Commissionaris of the sewin burrowis appointed to conwene thairatt to informe thame mair fullie of thair estaitt, ressoun, and confer with thame thairvpoun for forder ordour to be tane thairanent, to quhome the saidis burrowis gewis powir and commission to that effect." When one contrasts the primitive state of matters bodied forth in the above minute he is not unnaturally constrained to marvel at the momentous changes which have been brought about in the city during the past three centuries. Three hundred years ago Glasgow appeared to be a laggard in the way of advancement and a reproach to the rest of the Scottish burghs ; now she is in the forefront and shines resplendent as one of the best regulated cities in the empire.

At the meeting of Convention of the subsequent year, which was held at Aberdeen, Glasgow had as representative one Thomas Pittigow, but as the city had not obeyed the injunctions of the Convention by sending two special Commissioners to treat anent the establishing of a Dean of Guild Court, the authorities were found fault with for their "misordour and disobedience," and enjoined to send properly-instructed parties to the next Convention "to intreit, conclude and decerne in the said mater."

At the particular Convention held in Aberdeen in 1596, the missive served on Glasgow, anent the establishing of a Guildry Court, was again before the Assembly, and their deliverance was as follows :— "Anent the nyntene act of the last Conventioun generall concerneing the erectioun

of ane gildre within brugh of Glasquow, compeirit Thomas Pittigrow, merchand, and James Braidwod, ane of the deykins of the said brugh, and productit ane commission subscriuit be the provest, bailleis, and comoun clerk of the said brugh, and vnder the commoun seill as appeirit, geweand thame powir to declair that, for, the ressounis thairin contenit, the said mater it is thocht to be ane grit noveltie and appearand to bring dissensioun, amangis thame, and that they think nane may impose that to thame bot thair superiour and be thair consent, quhairwith thay as yit are nocht resolut, ane wechtie mater that heirtofore hes nocht bene interpryssitt, and thairfoire to desyre the samyn to ceis and stay quhill, thai all in ane voce be suitteris and resolut awysetlie thairanent, as at lenth was contenit in the said commissioun, and the saidis persouns being requyreit, gif thai haid ony forther powir to intreit and resoun in the said matir, ansueret that thai haid na forther to speik, nor was contenit in the said Commissioun ; nather wold thai enter ressoning with the Commissioneris thairvpon, alegeing thai had na Commissioun sua to do ; quhairby the saidis Commissioneris fand that thai refuissit to satisfie the desyre of the said generall Conventioun of burrowis, and zit nochtwithstanding thairof the saidis Commissioneris offerit to thame the owt-drawcht of the forme of gildry vsit at Edinbrugh to be careit to thair magistratts and counsall, to the effect thai nicht haue been fullie advyseit thairwith aganethe nixt Conventioun of burrowis, and thair to haue gevin ane ressoun tō ewerie heid thairof ; and thaireftir the saidis tua Com-

missioneris was at lenth content to accept the samyn to the effect foirsaid ; in respect quhair of the saidis Commissioneris hes thocht guid to remitt and continew, and be thir presents remitts and continewis the said mater to the nixt generall Conventioun of burrowis, ordaning the said burch to send twa Commissioners for the merchants and crafts to the said Conventioun to ressoun thairvpon and resave the will and determination of the burrowis thairanent for satisfieyng of the said act of the last Conventioun at Abirdeyn, with certificatioun, and vnder the panes contenit thairin ; and this to be ane heid of the nixt generall missiue." In 1598 the general Convention of Royal Burghs met at Burntisland, and they, with the consent of the representatives from Glasgow, adjourned consideration of the formation of a Guildry Court in Glasgow to the next general Convention, under the former conditions.

In 1598 the Convention met in Glasgow, when the matter in dispute was disposed of in this wise :— "Anent the mater of the gildrie of this burgh of Glasgow, mentionat in the — act of the last Conventioun, certane persouns complained in name of the merchandis and craftismen of the said brugh efter privat and public conference haid with thame and certane thair bretherin, findis that thai can nocht agre thairvpon amangis them selffis, and thairfoir decernis the said mater to desert quhill it be walkint and socht of new be consent of the haill brugh." The Glasgoweians would not have even a good thing thrust upon them contrary to their inclinations. Of course,

in the aftertime the matter was wakened and sought of new by the hail burgh, and a Dean of Guild Court established in Glasgow. The matter which immediately follows definitely shews the date when that important step was taken.

On February 6th, 1605, Glasgow did at last concede to the general wish of the Convention of Royal Burghs, as expressed over a series of years at their annual meetings. For on the above date the Letter of Guildry was framed, which determined and fixed the privileges and prerogatives of the Merchant and Craft ranks of the burgh—the latter numbering fourteen.

One enterprising burgess of the merchant rank in two voyages, made in 1621 and 1622, between Glasgow and Flanders, in the home run imported goods on his own account, which in value considerably exceeded three thousand pounds Scots, prime cost. In addition thereto he had as part of the cargoes merchandise which he had imported on behalf of others, representing an outlay of large sums of money. Before 1640, such merchants as Sir Patrick Bell, Colin Campbell of Blythswood, William Anderson of Dovehill, and James Bell had in their commercial operations realised large fortunes. The Letter of Guildry alluded to declares that it is not agreeable to the honour of the calling of Guild Brother to tapp tar, herring, onions, kaill, and such like small things, so that the above-named notables eschewed these ignoble pursuits, and followed after nobler game to good purpose, and became the pioneers of Glasgow's enormous and ever increasing trade with foreign countries, and exemplified in a satisfactory manner the trading

capabilities which have distinguished Scotsmen for many generations.

The Letter of Guildry consists of three principal divisions, each of which has its sub-divisions. The first treats of the Dean of Guild and the merchant rank, the second of the Deacon-Convener and the crafts, and the third of the Visitor of maltmen and those of this craft. These three general divisions had each their general officer—the Dean holding office, and twenty-four other merchants, selected by him, nominated two of their own rank and the Dean to be a leet. The Deacon-Convener was elected in this wise:—The entire body of the deacons of crafts and their assistants chose two craftsmen and the Deacon-Convener. The leets were submitted to the Provost, Bailies, Council, and Deacons, who selected and appointed one person from each leet to the respective offices. The election of the Visitor was accomplished thus:—The whole maltmen and mealmen made up a leet which was submitted to the Provost, Bailies, and Council, who from it made an appointment. It may here be stated that the jurisdiction of the Visitor in matters relating to his own craft was co-extensive with that of the Deacon-Convener's in things which effeired to the other thirteen incorporations. By the Letter of Guildry, the Dean of Guild, as head of the Court, is invested with an ample authority befitting his high position and important duties. These powers have in the lapse of time been enormously increased to enable him to deal effectually with the requirements of the second city in the empire in this far advanced nineteenth century.



NON-RESIDENT FREEMEN SMARTLY DEALT WITH.  
"TYMMER" SCARCE IN THE WEST COUNTRY,  
AND CONSEQUENT ALTERATION IN SIZE OF  
BARRELS, ETC.

At the general convention of Royal Burghs, holden at Burntisland in 1597, comperit the Commissionaris of brughis of Air, Glasgow, and producit the actis vnder written, and thairvpon desyreit the allowance of this present conventioun, and to be registrat in thair buikis, thair authoritie to be interponit thairto, with executoriallis to follow thairvpon, as effeiris ; quhilkis actis being red and considerit, the saidis Commissionaris ratefeit and approwit the samyn, and ordainit thame to be registrat in the buik of Conventioun in maner foirsaid, except and awayis that pairt of the saidis actis concerning the mesouris and jadgeis, quhilk thai allow na forder nor agreis with the lawis of this realm : —off the quhilk act the tennour followis.

At Glasgow the xxiiij day of Aprile Jm. Vc. four scoir yeiris : The quhilk day comperit the Commissionaris of Burrowis in the west, efter-specyfeit, be missiue send be ather to vtheris to awyse, treitt, and conclude vpon certane effairis for the weill of the burrowis, sic as to put ordour to the gadge of hogheidis and barrellis, and reformeing of vnfremenis trafficking ; and als to put remeid and ordour to burgessis, fremen nocht duelland nor beirand commoun chairges within thair brughis, and ewerie Commissioner producit ane commissioun fra the brugh he was Commissioner (of), as follows :—Air, George Cocherane, baillie ; Thomas Mure, James Tempill ; Irewin, William Scott ; Dumbartane, William Cwninghame ; Renfrow, John Jaksoun,



Adam Knok, bailleis; Rothsay, Johnne Stewart; Ruglein, Johnne Ryddell.

The quhilk day it was agreit and concludit be the Commissioneris foirsaidis, observing the preuelege of thair brughis, conforme to the act maid on the generall conventioun of burrowis holden last in Stryviling, that the magistrattis of ewerie ane of thair touns sall caus all persouns maid burgessis be ony of thair touns that dwellis nocht nor makis actuall residence thairinto, and ar traffikqueris as fremen or hes ony comoun landis within ony of the brughis foirsaid to be chairgit be thair nameiss in speciall, ather personle or at the mercatt croceis respectiue, vpon ane mercatt day in tyme of mercatt be thair officeris to cum and resorte to thair said brugh quhair thai war maid fre with thair fameless, and thair ta mak actuall residence and duelling within the samyn, and to do sic thingis as becumis thame and vnderly the chairges of the toun, as other fremen dois, betuixt and the fyftene day of June. nixt, mak and publicatioun and certificatioun to thame gif thai failze thairin thair fredomeis salbe cryit doun, and thai fra that day furth to be repute, haldin, and vsit as vnfremen, and haue na preuelege of fredome thairunto. And siclyk the saidis Commissioneris hes statute and ordanit, that in tyme cuming thair sall be na persoun maid fremen and burges in ony of the saidis touns bot sic as ar actuall induelleris, resident within the saymn, and mak securitie for remaning and induelling thairinto, and doing of his dewty of the samyn as becumis ane freman; and incais he makis nocht residence to tyne his

fredome *ipso facto*, and to be repute vnfre fra thene furth.

Item, that ewerie ane of thair touns sall be thair Commissioneris geve up ane report of the hail nameis of all vnfremen that vsis traffik of fremen within thair boundis to the nixt generall assemble of burrowis, that thai may be perseivit be the agent thairfoir.

At Glasgow xxv Aprile, 1595. The quhilk day, the hail Commissioneris of burrowis before writtin, haifing consideratioun that, vpon eirnest suite the gadge of hering, quhtyt fische and salmond, the hogheid was reducit fra aughtene gallouns to fyftene gallouns, and now haifing ressonit and weill awyseitt that, for skairsness of tymer in this west cuntrey, and of skowis (outside boards of trees) for making of treyis (sticks or staves) in sic grit quantitie be verray bair and scant to be gottin, and thairfoir hard it is to keep the said greit gadge, albeit in verray deid thai ar maist willing to caus the samyn be of fyftein gallouns, sa neir as they gudley may : For satefactioun and obidience of the auld statutis and constitutiouns sett down thairanent thairfor all in ane voce hes concludit, and be thir presentis byndis and obliss thame and thair brughis foirsaidis, ilk ane vtheris, to caus everie couper, craftismen, makers of hogheidis and barrellis, in thair saidis touns respectiue, to mak the samyn hogheidis of fyftene gallouns, or at the leist xiiij. gallouns and ane halff, and the barrellis to be half thairof ; and sua mony as sall nocht extend (to) that quantitie xiiij. gallouns and ane half, and the barrell half of the samyn, sall be confiscatt be the magis-

trattis and visitouris of ilk brugh as sall be appointit thairfore in the samyn respectiue ; and ilk brugh thair of quhais magistratis and vvisitouris failzeis thairintill, and dois nocht thair extreme and exact delegece for executing thair of sall pay of penulte to that said remanent burrowis, keiparis of the samyn the soume of ane hundreth pundis, and for the better obseruance of the premissis it is concludit be the saidis Commissioners that the makeris of the said treyis sall stamp ilk hogheid and barrell wrocht be him with his awin mark, that it may be knawin of sufficient wark and quantitie as saidis ; and of all sic treyis as thai sall happin to mak for paking of salmond, hering and quhyt fische alanerlie, vnder the pane of X li, of everie persoun making the samyn les, being convict thairintill be the magistrattis of the brugh quhair thai deull *totius quotiis* ; and to this effect ilk brugh mak ane stamp to be keipit be the visitour of the said brugh, to the effect that na wanting the samyn mark be uisit, and the visitour marking the trey of les quantitie to pay ane hundreth pundis. And further, for restraning of vnfremen of fremenis treyis in paking and peilling (piling or pairing) it is ordanit that na visitour appointit as saidis sall affixit the touns mark vpon ony treyis to be maid to quhatsumevir vnfremen, keipand the quantitie aboue rehersit ; and that na freman quhatsamevir by packit hering fra vnfremen nor vtheris except markit as saidis vnder the said pane jc. li. ; and that na freman cowper or vtheris, sall sell ony treyis stampit with the touns mark to ony vnfremen, except thai first scraip off and put

away the toun's mark thairfra vnder the said pane of jc lib, and alsua they haue ordainit that na awner nor skipper of ony schip, bark, or boit, ressaue on the samyn ony vnfremenis guidis quhatsumevir, nor yet ony hering, salmond, or quhyit fische of ony fremenis, bot sic as salbe stampit with ony of the saidis toun's mark, vnder the pane of jc li.; and the haille pennalteis abouvwritten, sa oft as thai sall be convict, to be vpliftit be the magistrattis and visitour of ilk brugh, quhair the contrauenear duellis, and to be bestowit vpon the comoun weillis thairof, all except the penalteis appointit for ilk brugh, quhair of the magistrattis and visitours be thair negligence or vthervayis are contrauenearis, and nocht putting this act into executioun concerning the gadge, the samyn to be vpliftit be the generall agent of the burrowis to be utilitie of the haille burrowis; keiparis and obserueris of the ordinanceis above specyfeit. And for tryell and probation of the contrauentiouns the haille Commissioneris foirsaidis consentis and ar content that ony honest inhabitants of the said brugh, or ony of thame, sall be admitit in sufficient witness for proving of the said contrauentioun, quhen the samyn sall happin to be persewit before quhatsumevir judge, nochtwithstanding ony alegeance of the law that may be alegit on the contrair, renunceand the samyn fra thame and thair brughis respective foirsaidis for evir; and, that the actis before writtin in this Conventioun may be observit and corroboratioun thairof, the foirnameit Commissioneris sall caus the Commissioneris of everie ane of thair touns that sall be direct to the next general assemble of burrowis

to craif and maist eirnestlie suit the assistance, conformatioun, and approbatioun of the samyn, be the hail Commissioneris of brughis that sal be present at the said generall Conventioun, that thair authoritie may be interponit thairto and execution follow thairvpon, as efferis. In token of the promiss all before writtin hes subscrivit the samyn as followis, at Glasgow the xxvj day of Aprile, 1595; followis the subscriptions:— George Cocherane, baillie, Commissioner for Air; William Scott, as Commissioner for Irewin; James Stewart, baillie and Commissioner of Glasgow; William Cuningham, for Dumbartane; John Jakson, for Renfrow; John Stewart, Commissioner for Rothsay; John Ryddell, baillie of Ruglein; with our handis at the pen, led be the notaris vnderwrittin. *Ita est, Henricus Gibsoun, notarius de mandato dictarum trium personarum scribere nescientium manibus suis. Ita est, Jacobus Wyrnam, Commissionarius in premissis requisitus. Extractum de libris actorum burghi de Glaesgow per me magistrum Henricum Gibsoun, notarium ac communitatis scribam eiusdem testibus meis signe et subscriptione manu alibus.*

In the Convention of Royal Burghs held at Glasgow in 1598 “The saidis Commissioneris of burrowis ratefeis approwis and confermeis the actis and constitutiouns of burrowis maid of before anent the iadgers (gauges) and mesouris standant and byrning (branding) of salmond and hering barrelis, and anent the sufficient paking of hering and salmond, and for better executioun thairof, and speciale within the boundis quhair grittest difference is, ordanis the magistrattis of

the saidis brughis to appoint ane discreitt persoun within everie ane saidis brughis to be iadger, burneur, or wraker of all barrellis and hogheids of salmond and hering packit and sauld within the saidis brughis and liberteis thairoff, according to the saidis actis and actis of parliament maid thereanent of before, for the quhilk persounis the saidis brughis salbe ansuerabill, and ilk ane of them to report thair delegeance thairvpon to the nixt Conventioun vnder the pane of ane vnlaw of ane hundreth pundis, and this to be ane heid of the missiue, and becaus be sindrie actis of parliament powir is gevin to the saidis burrowis and to na vtheris the effect abouevritten, thairfoir incais ony vther persoun sall purches ony preive giftis or Commissiouns to the effect foirsaid, ordanis the saidis brughis to withstand the samyn and to suspend the chairgis to be raissit thairvpon, to quhome the remanent burrowis promesis thair assistance, ordaneing thair agent to resist in thair nameis as he sall be requireit, and ilk Commissioner present at thair returne to intimat this act to thair brugh that nane pretend ignorance.

An interesting account of the ancient Clyde herring fisheries, in which Glasgow was so much interested, is to be found in Crawford's "History of Renfrewshire" (1710), a shire which is bounded for a considerable number of miles by the river Clyde, and having within its borders Greenock, Crawford's-dike, Gourock, Newark, and Inverkip, which of old yielded the greatest number of the Clyde fishers. The herrings which are caught there, the old historian goes on to say, are larger, firmer, and of better taste, and take

better with the salt than any others that the kingdom affords, and are, therefore, most highly valued at home and abroad, either in their fresh or salted state. When the fishing in the river Clyde was at its best, there were about nine hundred boats employed in the prosecution of the industry. These vessels were built after the form of little galleys, each boat being manned by four men, who fished with twenty-four nets, of six fathoms in length by a fathom and a half in breadth, all joined together, forming "a fleet of nets." In more ancient times none were allowed to fish till the 25th of July, about which time the shoals used to come from the sea to the Clyde, and such as went afishing before that time were liable to a certain "pecunial mulct." In very old times the fishing went on thrice during the year. These were termed the Drave times, a term still used for them in the east of Scotland. There was payable to the Crown, out of each boat after each Drave, a thousand herring of such a bigness as was then determined.

This levy was afterwards paid by a measure of a fixed size and bigness, from whence that duty came to be called the "Assyze Herring," which, by act of parliament in the reign of King James III, was annexed to the Crown, of which the Most Honourable His Grace John Duke of "Argile," as also his ancestors, have for a long time had tacks, with a jurisdiction annexed, for regulating the fishing and punishing crimes committed by any employed about it, between the Firth of Pictland (Pentland) and the "Mule" of Galloway (the isles of Orkney and Zetland excepted). The herrings were sold by the fishers



to the Coopers viz., such as retailed them for the service of the country, and packers *i.e.*, such as were employed by merchants to buy herrings, to be barrelled for export and foreign sale by the maze, which contains 500.

The curing and right of packing herring for export was strictly regulated by several acts of parliament, which among other things made it imperative that each barrel must contain eight gallons and a quarter of Scots measure ; considerable drawbacks were allowed the export merchants in consideration of the duty paid on the foreign salt made use of by them in curing. No drawback was allowed unless the merchant or curer made oath that the herring had been cured with unmixed foreign salt, and that they had been inspected by the official appointed for that purpose, and were by him sealed with a certain seal to testify as to their sufficiency.

About the year 1670 a company was formed termed a Royal Company, on account of King Charles II. being one of the partners, with the object in view of curing herring. Their headquarters was Greenock, where they built extensive cellarage and a suitable house for the proper conduct of the business. None other than that company were allowed to cure herring before the 20th day of September yearly. This restraint being represented to the government as a very heavy one upon the general merchants, the Royal Company was dissolved in 1684, their houses being bought by the Magistrates and Town Council of Glasgow.

The number of herring taken in the Firth of Clyde in some years was almost incredible. In



1674 there were exported to the port of "Rochel" in France 1700 last (the last being as far as I can learn 12 barrels). In addition to that large quantity there were exported to other ports in France, Sweden, "Dantzic," and other places within the "Baltick" large consignments, and when to these is added the home consumpt, which was very considerable, it will be seen that the herring industry was then, as it still continues to be, one of great national importance. In 1748 Clyde salmon were so plentiful that they were sold in the Glasgow market at one penny per pound. Long before and after that period those noble fish and the silver herring were along with oatmeal the staple food of the lower and middle classes of the country.

In the winter of 1868-69 after an absence of many years great shoals of herring once more entered the firth and river of Clyde, ascending as high up as Dunglass Castle and Dumbarton Quay. The Gareloch was swarming with them, and frequent special trains were dispatched from Helensburgh with the harvest of the sea.

**GLASGOW MAKES COMPLAINT AGAINST  
KIRKOWBRIK.**

At the Convention holdin at Kirkcaldy in 1592, Glasgow and other burghs made complent aganis the burch of Kirkcowbrik for vplifting ane extortioune of thame being fremen, in taking four bollis greit salt, land missure, of each schip and bark that arrivis within thair harbier, ordanis the said complenaris, togidder with the said burch of Kirkcowbrik, to compeir to ansuer heirto the next Conventioun, and to that effect,

to caus warne the burch of Kirkcowbrik to compeir vunder the pane of xx libris, and this to be rememberit in missiwis. The greit salt alluded to would doubtless be for fish-curing purposes, one of old Glasgow's great industries.

In the following year, 1593, at the Convention holden at Dysart, the complaint of Glasgow, etc., against Kirkcudbright was again before the assembly, but as Kirkcudbright had no representative present, the burgh was fined in another unlaw of twenty pounds, and was warned that if no appearance was made for them at next Convention, "they salbe decernit simpliciter to desist and ceis fra all vplifting of the said foure bolls of greitt saltt, and this to be rememberit in the missiues."

In 1594 the matter was again before the Convention held at Stirling. All parties to the suit being present, it was resolved that as Kirkcowbrik "allegit that thai are and hes bene in vuse of vplifting of the said custome of the quantity foresaid, fra friemen of burrowes, and assigns to thame the twenty sevin day of Junij nixt tocum, in the nixt Conventioun generall at Perth, for preving thairof; and the saids compleners, at the desyre of the pairty, gaif thair ayth *de calumnia* that thai haif just caus to deny the said exceptioun; and the saidis Commissioneris, with consent of the said Commissioner of Kirkcudbright, defender, ordanes the said burgh of Kirkcudbright to refund the said custome swa far as thai sall get fra the daitt heirof, in case they succumb in preving the said exceptioun."

In the following year the Convention was held

at Edinburgh to further consider the matter, but in the absence of certain important witnesses who had been cited to attend, the case was adjourned to the following Convention, at which it was once again postponed on account of the absence of necessary witnesses. How this case ended does not appear in the records, but the case in question is a most pertinent instance that the proverbial law's delay (or miscarriage) is not a thing of yesterday.

**FOUR MEN OF GLASGOW TO VISIT RUTHERGLEN  
AND REPORT UPON ITS ESTATE.**

Of date 1598 the saidis Commissioneris sitting at Glasgow ordanis the brugh of Glasgow to send foure men to wysie the estait of the toun and commoun rent of Ruglein, and to report to the Conventioun be the Commissioneris of the said brugh of Glasgow, thair knowlege thair of, and this to be the heid of the nixt missiue. And anent the bridge custome on the said burgh of Rutherglen, ordeans the said burgh of Rutherglen to pay to Glaskow yeirlie the soum of thrie pundis monye for thair impost thair of during the tyme of the samin.

**CHARGE AGAINST UNFREEMEN AND OUTLAND  
BURGESSES.**

At the same place and on the same day where the immediately foregoing minute was passed the assembled Commissioners "Ordanis the brughis of Edinbrugh, Glasgow, and Ruglein to try and cognosche vpon thair nichtbouris quhais nameis ar gevin up be the brugh of Dumbar to haue collourit vnfremen vnder pretence of thair

service at the fischeing and gif thai haive failzeitt pvnische them, and to report delegece to the nixt Conventioun, the nameis of the quhilkis persounis war delyuerit to thair present Commissioneris and this vnder the pane of twenty pundis ilk brugh. It was reported by Glasgow in 1612 before the Convention which met at Aberbrothock that well on for fifty outland burgesses had been deprived of their freedom, but as this had been done without parties being duly cited it was held to be invalid, and they were ordered to be proceeded against in proper legal form forthwith, which, it appears, was not done, for at Dumbar in 1613 the Convention “ordeans the burgh of Glasgow to produce ane mair formill decret and execution thair of anent the dischairing of thair non-resident burgessis in the nixt Conventione generall, under the pane of tuentie pund, and this to be ane heid of nixt missiue.”

In 1614 at Kirkcaldy and before the Convention the Commissioner for Glasgow “productit thair act of court in depryving of certain of thair outland burgessis conforme to the said act, quhilk the present Commissionars accepts for diligence for this tyme, and ordeans thame to vse farder diligence agains the saidis persones depryvit in causing of them to desist from all farder tredding, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue.”

Glasgow had used further diligence, for its representative reported to the Convention held in St Andrews in 1615 “that thair depryvit burgessis had desisted from vsurping the liberties of regall burrowis, quhilk declaratioun the saidis

Commissioners accepts for diligence." Thus the outland burgesses of Glasgow were pushed to the wall to the joy and relief of the Royal Burghs of the realm.







OLD TOLBOOTH TOWER, GLASGOW CROSS, FROM HIGH STREET.





## Section II.

### MISCELLANEOUS EXCERPTS FROM RECORDS OF DATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

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As the frontispiece of this section of my book, I give a view of the old tower or steeple of the Tolbooth, one of the very few memorials of olden Glasgow which have survived the ceaseless gnawing of the iron tooth of Time, and is apparently destined to withstand its assaults for a century or two to come ere biting the dust.

The height of this massy, beautifully-proportioned, gracefully-crowned keep, which still, as of old, holds watch and ward over the heart of the city, is 120 feet. If in it or its near neighbourhood, civic dignitaries no longer meet, nor merchants any more do love to congregate, yet around it, as of yore, the rushing, surging, restless streams of human beings, but in ever-increasing magnitude, sweep along in their fate-fraught way, soon to be swallowed up, as their forbears were, in the great ocean of



eternity, and be to this world as if they ne'er had been.

Than the view of the old Tolbooth tower, and the properties in the High Street adjacent thereto, there is to the fore no more picturesque and interesting bit of street scenery in the venerable city of Sanct Mungo.

#### THE OLD TOLBOOTH OF GLASGOW AND SOME OF ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

This old time prison and familiar land mark was removed in 1814 from its wonted position, north east corner of Trongate. It stood on the site of a very ancient building also of a punitive character, named the Praetorium, which like to its successor contained within its massy walls a court house as well as official quarters and numerous prison cells. The more recent of the two prisons was founded in 1626 in the second year of the reign of Charles I., and was erected within the space of two years. Listen to the opinion of an Englishman named Franck regarding the stately building and the goodly city of which it was an imposing adornment. "Now let us descend," he writes in 1652, "to describe the splendour and gayety of this city of Glasgow, which surpasseth most, if not all the Corporations of Scotland. Here it is you may observe four fair streets (High Street, Trongate, Gallowgate, and Saltmarket) modell'd as it were into a spacious quadrant, in the centre whereof their market place is fixed, near to which stands a stately Tolbooth—a very sumptuous, regulated, uniform fabric, large and lofty; most industriously and artificially carved, from the very foundation

to the superstructure, to the great admiration of strangers and travellers. But this state house or Tolbooth is their western prodigy, infinitely excelling the model and usual build of town-halls, and is without exception the paragon of beauty in the west, whose compeer is nowhere to be found in the north, should you rally the rarities of all the Corporations in Scotland.”

The original stately staircase of the building facing Trongate was taken down in 1736, and another erected in 1792, on the plat or stairhead of which on 4th June—the birthday of King George III.—the magistrates appeared in the evening in all their pride of pomp and circumstance, amid the ringing of bells and the shouts of the assembled crowd, and there “drank the healths.” Every health pledged was accompanied by a salvo of musketry, from a company of soldiers stationed on the street, and the emptied glasses thrown to the people by whom they were treasured as relics of these joyous anniversaries. With the abandonment of the public *al fresco* celebrations of the birthdays of kings and queens and similar functions public life has lost much of its picturesqueness and become prosaic. We now in regard to such doings take our pleasure sadly, the fear of Mrs Grundy being much in evidence. The fashion of all things changeth, and as I opine the changes brought about are as a rule to the better. The music bells of the Tolbooth tower which still stands in its accustomed place have for long been a source of pride and pleasure to the inhabitants of the city. The chime, although somewhat defective in the musical scale, is yet pleasant to hear amid the

roar and bustle of the mighty place, and scattereth the concord of sweet sounds like a benediction upon the toiling populace.

About 1788 public executions ceased to take place at the Castle yard (head of High Street), and afterwards were effected outside the Tolbooth at the Cross. When a victim to offended justice had to be offered up a large scaffolding was erected, extending from the "*houf door*" of the prison onward to the west extremity thereof. On the centre of the floor of this platform there was placed a red-painted table, ascended by a few steps, and on this the observed of all observers, the hangman and the doomed one, stood for a time, surrounded by at least one clergyman and representatives of the Magistracy of the city, prior to the bolt being drawn by the executioner, which loosened the machinery and launched the wretched criminal from the fatal beam into eternity. After the body was removed, the rope was left to dangle in the face of the sun as a warning to evil-doers. Of course, those all too frequent proceedings were viewed by thousands of eager eyes. The appetite for such debasing scenes grew with what it fed on, and multitudes of people would gladly sacrifice a night's rest and a half day's wage rather than miss the tragic spectacle of a hanging. Executions took place, in the days I write of, on Wednesdays at three o'clock p.m. During the period between being adjudged to death and the time when the culprit's taking off was accomplished, the doomed one was remembered in the prayers of all religious families, from whose family altars intercessions for mercy were offered up to Him who hears

“the prisoner’s groans and sighs ;” and on Sundays in the churches the precentor regularly uttered aloud to the congregation and minister the ejaculatory cry of “Remember in prayer a man under sentence of death.”

Ere the mobs dispersed from viewing the harrowing and all too frequent spectacles alluded to, hoarse voiced and coarse grained fellows, saturated with whisky, were offering for sale halfpenny broadsides containing the ready-made, highly-spiced, fictitious “last speech and dying confession” of the criminal, who, after hanging an hour, was, if a murderer, conveyed to the College for dissection in the shell or coffin which lay on the scaffold to receive his unhallowed remains.

Now, thank God, all such horrid scenes are things of the past, and the shuffling off of the mortal coil of even the most abandoned sinner against God and the majesty of the law is done with quiet solemnity and in semi-privacy. Instead of the old time gloating of many thousands over the ignominious hanging of a miserable being for the robbery with violence of possibly “twopence and an old knife” these ghouls who loved to batten on the dead have now to be content with the sight of the hoisting of a black flag from the summit of the new prison at Glasgow Green, which tells the tale that the extreme penalty of the law has been paid by some poor erring brother or sister, and that he or she had been sent to their dread account to answer for all the deeds done in the body.

According to the records of the burgh, in addition to having the custody of persons accused

or convicted of grave offences, the local authorities had to do with the punishment of minor offenders against law and order, as instance imprisonment in the Tolbooth for assaults on the person, such as "strykin" on the mouth with the faulded neive, hitting on the chaftis, dinging down to the erd (earth), dowpin (inflicting punishment through the buttocks), and using whingers (short swords used for cutting up meat at table and making cold meat of men at brawls). In addition there was the scourging of randie hizzies, thieves and vagabonds through the town, conjoined with banishment from the burgh under the penalty if ever they be found therein again they are to be considered worthy of death. Then the city fathers punished "flyters" and other malicious people by means of the Branks and Jougs, Ducking and the Stocks. Betimes the local rulers resorted to the branding on the cheek of beggars belonging to other parts, if they failed after being admonished to depart furth of the town within twenty-four hours. "Goips" (most likely obnoxious garbs) were available for investing fish wives who were guilty of forestalling the market, besides all these means of punishing evidoers Amends and Repentance had to be made to the Kirk for the breaking of oaths, and Amends in public were enjoined for other offences. The Market Cross being the spot where these were made upon bended knees, and the forgiveness of God and of the person wronged beseeched in apparently devout terms. The crying down of the freedom of burgesses was done by one of the town's officers at the Cross on a market day. For

serious offences Homage and Repentance had to be made by the perpetrators thereof at the "Hie Kirk of Glasgow." The punishing of people for misdeeds, by fines of varying degrees, was then as now a common practice for replenishing the municipal treasury. Before closing I have just a word or two to say on one of the subjects alluded to above, namely, the scourging of evildoers of certain types. These were stripped naked to the waist, attached to the tail of a cart, having in attendance two of the town's officers and the hangman of the burgh all clad in their official uniforms. The hangman administered the first dose of flagellation at the Market Cross, then certain other stations in streets contiguous thereto were visited, and the humiliating, barbarous, demoralising inflictions resumed, to the disgust of saints and the hardening of sinners. About fifty stripes might be laid on the backs of the miserable wretches during the perambulation. The last local instance of a female having been publicly whipped took place so recent as the end of the last century. Evil things die hard.

**GLASGOW DESIRES TO SEND A COMMISSIONER TO  
LONDON TO TREAT OF THE UNION OF THE  
TWO KINGDOMS.**

At the Convention held in Perth, July, 1604, "Comperit James Forrett, Commissioner of Glasgow, and desyritt in name of the said burgh, that the Commissioneris presentle convenit sould nominatt the said burgh as ane of the nvmber of the aucht quha sould pas to Ingland for the mater of the Vnioun, as lykwayis the

Commissioneris of Dundy declarit that thai haid nominat Johne Fynlaysoun for their said brugh, and thairvpon askit instrumentis."

**RENFREW BURGESSES COMPLAIN AGAINST  
GLASGOW.**

Of date, Dumbarton, 3rd July, 1607, there appears the following minute, "Anent the complaint of George Brysoun and George Hall, burgessis of Renfrew, aganis the brugh of Glasgow, for trubling and molesting of the saidis persounis in bying of merchandrice within thair awin brugh and herbere thair of, and for vnlawing of thame and thair souerteis, as at mair lenth is contenit in the said complaint, the saidis Commissioneris remits the decisioun of the said mater to the nixt general conventioun, ordaneing the said brugh to cum instructit to ansuer thairto, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

In 1608 the matter referred to was before the Convention which met at Selkirk, with this result—"Anent the complaint of Renfrew contrair Glasgow, mentionat in the 26 act of the last Conventioun, conteneis the decisioun thair of to the nixt Conventioun, ordaneing the perseweris of the said complaint to be thair personall presens; and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

At the same meeting Renfrew laid before it the following grievance—"The same day, anent the complaint of Renfrew contrair Glasgow for admitting of — thair burgessis, quha duellis in Kilmacolm, and makis na residence within thair brugh sen the time of thair admissioun, ordanis the said brugh to be warnit be the generall



(missiue) to ansuer thairto, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

At Coupar, in 1609, the Convention "Ordanis the brugh of Glasgow to compeer sufficientlie instructit to ansuer to the complaint of Ranfrow, mentionat in the 26 act of the Convention holdin at Dumbartane, in anno 1607, and to the vther complaint mentionat in the 42 act of the last Conventioun, and to the complaint of the brugh of Ruglein, mentionat in the 29 act of the last Conventioun ; and the premissis to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

These controversies still dragged their slow length along, and we find that they were before the Craill meeting of 1610 for adjudication, which gave no decision on their several merits, but came to this finding—"Anent the complents of the brughs of Ranfrow and Ruglein contra Glasgow, mentionat in the 18 act of the last Conventioun, and dyvers actis maid of befor, quhilk hes bein ane heid of sundrie former missiues and actis, both the pairteis being present, the Commissionars continuis the decisione of the said complement vnto the nixt generall Conventioun, with consent of pairteis, quhom they ordean to cum sufficientlie instructit with thair clames, defensis, ansuers, richts, probations, that iustice may be ministratt vnto thame, ilk ane of them under the payne of tuentie pounds ; and this to be ane heid of nixt missiue."

The Convention held at Stirling in 1611 made some progress in the way of settling these disputed points, for one of the minutes thereof goes on to state that, "Anent the complement of Ren-



frow contrair Glaskow for molesting of thame in bying of thair merchandrice within thair awin brugh and harbere, and for admitting of bur-gesses at Kilmakome non-resident within thair awin brugh ; both the said parteis being present, the said Commissioneris, with the consent of parteis, continuis the decisione thairof quhil the nixt generall Conventione ; and this to be ane heid of the nixt missive. And anent the complent of Rutherglen contrair Glaskow, for exacting ane custome at thair bridge with (of) ane liddell-full of bear and malt vpon the markett day ; both thair Commissionars being present, thair resons hard and considerit, the said Commissionars assolzies the said brugh of Glaskow fra the said laidill custome, in respect of ane decret of the Lords given thairanent, producit be Glaskow.”

#### GLASGOW WECHTS.

At Selkirk, 5th July 1608, and before the Conventioun, “James Inglis, Commissioner for the brugh of Glasgow, producit ane testimoniall of the bailleis of Lanerick, beiring thair resait of the trone and trois weicht, mentionat in the 34 act of the last Conventioun haldin at Dumbar-tane, and thairvpon askit instrumentis.”

#### CHARGE TO GLASGOW AND AYR ANENT GAUGE FOR FISH BARRELS.

The Conventioun, at its sitting at Cupar in 1609, “Ordanis the burghis of Glasgow and Air to report thair delegece in writt to the nixt Conventioun in making of the barrelis of hering and salmond conforme to act xx of the last Conventioun, vnder the pane of ane vnlaw of xl li. ; and

this to be ane heid of the nixt missine." Dumbarton, Irvine, and Ayr reported that they had in the making of their barrels conformed to the Act referred to.

At Crail, where the Convention met in the subsequent year, the Commissioners for Glasgow and Ayr being again absent from same, the meeting "thairfor ordeans thame to extract the act of the last Convention anent size of thair barrels of hering and salmond and to report thair diligence the nixt Conventione in observing thair of, under the payne of ——— and this to be ane heid of the nixt missine."

At Stirling, in 1611, when the Commissioners of royal burghs sat there in session, they, "after long ressoning upon the samyn, ordeans the burghs of Glaskow, Air, Dumbartane, and the haille burrowes of the west to mak thair barelis of the measures mentionat in the actis of parliament maid thairanent, notwithstanding the act of burrowis maid at Selkirk, and to report thair diligence thairvpon nixt Conventioun. Accordingly at the next Convention, which was held at Aberbrothock, "The present Commissioners of Air, Glasgow, and Dumbartane agreit and consentit to mak the measurs of thair barrells of hering conforme to the iadge of Leith, and thair hogheids conforme to the full Bordeaux toun (ton) iadge, and of the salmond according to the acts of burrowes, and to begin the samyne betuix and the first day of May nixt to cum. Ordeans thame and all uther burrowes in the west to report thair diligence thairanent the nixt generall Conventione; and this to be ane heid of nixt missieue."

At Dunbar, in the year of our Lord 1613, the Convention decerned “ Anent the fyft act of the last Conventione generall concerning the measurs of salmond and hering in the west, the saidis Commissionars with the consent of the burghs of Glasgow, Air, Dumbartane, and remanent west burrowes, dischairges thame fra all paking of salmond and hering in hogheids fra this yeir furth in all tyme cumming, in respect of the diversitie of the bind (size) of the said measur and fraud thairof.”

**GLASGOW SUPPLICATES SUPPORT FOR CLEARING AND DEEPENING THE CLYDE AND FOR REPAIR OF HARBOUR.**

The Convention of 1610 was held at Crail and to it Glasgow applied for assistance to help in the good work of improving the river Clyde, and to their request the following reply was made:—  
 “Anent the supplicatione of the burgh of Glasgow, cravand support to the taking away of the sands in Water of Clyd stopping the schippis and barkis fra in-cumming to the sand toun, continuis to the nixt generall Conventione, and ordeans to be ane heid of the nixt missiue.”  
 In the minutes of the Convention held at Aberbrothock in 1612 the following appears—“Anent the supplicatione of the burgh of Glasgow, cravand licence to impetrat ane impost of ten schillings of every boatt and bark cumming to thair toun, continuis the ansuer thairof to the nixt generall Conventione, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue under the pane of tuentie pundis.”

At the Convention held in Stirling in 1611

Glasgow applied along with the burghs of Aberdeen and Stainhyve for help, the subjoined extract from the records explains for what. "Anent the supplicatiouns of the burghs of Abirbroth, Aberdein for the Stainhyve, and Glaskow for support to the reparatioun of thair harberies and caussis mentionat in thair billis, continues the samyn to the nixt Conventioun, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

The application came before the Convention held in Aberbrothock in 1612, and the answer thereto was—"Anent the (13) act of the last Conventioun, concerning Glasgow and other burghs, to caus repair sufficientlie thair calsayes within thair ports and touns, and to report thair diligence the nixt generall Conventioun, under the payne of ane hundred pounds ilk burgh, and this to be ane heid of nixt missive."

The matter at this stage drops out of sight, the minutes bears no evidence of its ever having been before the Convention again, and Glasgow was apparently left to improve its river, harbour, and causeway unaided and alone. Its citizens have improved these in an almost unexampled way at a cost which would have appeared fabulous to our forefathers of three centuries ago. In 1772 the Clyde was a shallow river with a channel much too wide for the average quantity of water which flowed through it, and twelve shoals in a very special way obstructed the passage of vessels to and from the burgh. At the Broomielaw there was then at spring-tides only three feet of water, and at neap tides one, so that in dry seasons even humble lighters took several weeks to reach the city from

the lower reaches of the Clyde. Now the largest ships afloat, six thousand tons burthen and upwards, can reach Glasgow from the frith in one tide and lie afloat at its spacious harbour safely. "God helps those who help themselves."

**GLASGOW COMPLAINS ABOUT THE WEIGHT AND INSUFFICIENCY OF STIRLING BREAD.**

At Stirling in 1611 the Commissioners to the Convention of Royal Burghs "vpon the complent of Glasgow contrair Striviling vpon the pace (weight) and insufficiencie of thair breid, and of Dunfermling against Striviling for not suffering thame to sell thair breid in thair burgh vpon merkitt dayes, thair Commissioners being present, the Commissionars of burrowes continuis the samyne to the nixt generall Conventione, and ordeans ilk ane of thame to cum sufficientlie instructit with thair richts, ressonis, and probations, under the pane of tuentie punds, And siclyk ordeans ilk burgh to report to nixt Conventione thair diligence in taking ordour with thair baxters and breid markitts for serving his maisties lieges with sufficient stuf and of competent pryces and waicht, according to the lawes of the realme and priviledge of burgh ; and the premiss to be ane heid of the nixt missiue."

**RENFREW DISPUTES WITH GLASGOW ANENT IMPOST ON HERRING.**

"The samyn day, anent the complaint of the brugh of Renfrow producit be thair Commissioner aganis the brugh of Glasgow, for vplifting fra the nichtbouris and inhabitantis of the said brugh of Renfrow sex penneis vpon ilk thousand

hering cumand to thair brig, baith the said Commissioneris present, contenevis ony ansuer gifing to the said complaint quhill the nixt Conventioun, ordaning the saidis Commissioneris to cum sufficientlie instructit with thair richtis, ressounis, and allegeanceis vnder the pane of ane vnlaw of xx lib., and this to be ane heid of the nixt missiue." In 1603 the Convention "decernis and ordanis the said brugh of Glasgow to decist and ceis in tyme cumming fra vplifting the said dewty," and relieved the burgh of Renfrew from the payment of the obnoxious impost.

#### GLASGOW AND RENFREW BURY THE HATCHET.

At Aberbrothock, in 1612, "Compirrit the Commissionars of Renfrew and Glasgow and past fra thair compleints *pro loco et tempore, hinc inde.*" After fighting for several years they had there mutually agreed to bury the hatchet—no doubt to the great relief of the Convention.

#### DISPUTE REGARDING RANKING OF BURGHS.

In 1612, at the Convention held at Aberbrothock "anent the mater of the prioritie and ranking of burrowes, mentionat in the (16) act of the last Conventione, the saidis Commissionars continuis the decisione thair of to the nixt generall Conventione, and ordeans ilk burgh to cum sufficientlie instructit with thair resolutione on the said mater, and this to be ane heid of the nixt missive; and the mein tyme ordeans the burghs of Stirling, Linlithgoe, Sanctandros, and Glasgow, contendand that nane of thame

sitt down in this present Convention quhill they be called and placed, ilk ane of thame under the payne of ten pound *toties quoties*; and Gilbert Mure, Commissionar of Linlithgoe, askit instruments vpon the productione be the present Commissionar of Sanctandros of ane letter missive direct to the burroues by the Archbischope thair of, quhairin his Lordschip calles himself superior and lord of that citie." The reformation of religion had now begun, and some of the stout assembled burghers would have no Popish priest to lord it over God's heritage without challenge.

**SPECIAL CHARGE TO GLASGOW AND ST ANDREWS  
ANENT ELECTION OF MAGISTRATES AND  
DEACONS OF CRAFTS.**

At the Convention held in Perth in 1616 amongst other business the following was transacted:—"The saidis Commissioners of burroues having sein and considerit the forme of the electione of magistrats, counsell, and deacons of crafts within the said burroues, and finding the tuentie sext act of the last generall Conventione of burroues haldin at the burgh of St. Andros maid thairanent hes not bein well observit at the feast of Michelmes last, thairfor they of new ratifies and approves the said act in all the heids, clauses, and articles thair of, and ordeans the samyne to be putt to farder executione, under the pains continit in the said act, and the Commissioners now present to intimat of new the samyne to thair burroues at thair hom cumming and caus the samyne to be inviolabellie observit, and ordeans ilk burgh, and in speciall the burghs of St Andros and Glasgowe to produce to the



nixt generall Conventioun of burroues the forme of the electione of thair magistrats, counsell, and deacons of crafts at Michelmes nixt to cum, and to proceed thairintill conforme to the acts of parliament and burroues."

**GLASGOW FINED IN AN UNLAW OF TWENTY POUNDS.**

One of the minutes of the 1628 Convention states as follows—"Forasmeikle as the Commission sent be the burgh of Glasgow be thair Commissioner, Gabriell Cuninghame, being red and considerit be the Commissioners of borrowes, they find that Ninian Andersoun, deykin convenar of the craftis of the said burgh, is elected Commissioner coniunctlie and seuerallie with the said Gabriell, which is against the actes of borrowes maid anent the electioun of Commissioners, and thairfore they decerne the said burgh in ane vunlaw of tuentie pundis, and ordains the agent to vplift the same and to be chairgit thairwith in his comptes, and to produce his diligence thairanent to the nixt generall Conventioun of borrowis, and siclyik dischairges the said Ninian of his pairt of the said Commission and fyndis he can haif no plaice nor vote in this Conventioun."

**A BAND BETWEEN THE MERCHANTS OF GLASGOW BROKEN:**

From the abstract of acts 1631-49 it is made to appear that "The Convention annuls ane mutuall band betuixt the merchants of Glasgow whereby they associate and bind themselves not to repair to the wooll mercat of Air very



prejudiciall to the sayd burgh by inhausing the hail price to themselves."

DISPUTE BETWIXT TWO GLASGOW BURGESSES  
AND CERTAIN TRADESMEN.

The matter came before the Convention held at Edinburgh in 1629 and regarding the same the minutes chronicle as follows :—" Anent the supplication presentit to this present Convention of burrowis be James Pollock, Commissioner for the burgh of Glasgow, upon ane referrence from the counsall of estaitts to the nixt generall Convention of burrowis anent the decisione of the difference betuixt Walter Neilson, lait baillie of Glasgow, and Manasses Lyll, on the ane pairt, and certane treadsmen of fyve Corportationis of the said burgh, on the uther pairt, anent severall injuries alledgit done by the saidis treadsmen to the said Walter Neilson and Manasseth Lyll . . . . ordanis thair clark to cite both the saidis pairties to appear befor the nixt generall Convention that the difference betuixt thame may be takin be thame in consideratione and determined thairin as they sall see fitt."

TWO TOWN CLERKS APPOINTED "AD VITAM AUT  
CULPAM."

Before the Convention of 1669 held in Edinburgh "Compeared Peter Gamill and James Ferrie, present bailyies of Glasgow, and presented ane gift *ad vitam* of the toun clerkship of Glasgow in favours of William Yair and George Andersone and craved the Conventiones approbatione and ratificatione therof, the which gift the Conventione ratifies and approves and dispensiss with all former acts of burrowes

dischargeing burghes to give gifts *ad vitam* to the clerks under quhatsumeuer penalties, and in particular the act of the Conuentione of burrowes made at Dysert in anno 1593 made anent choyseing clerks, and remits and discharges to the toun of Glasgow of all penalties conteined in the foirsaid acts in all tyme comeing, and declaires that it shall be lawfull to any of the royall burrowes to grant gifts *ad vitam aut culpam* to the respective clerks."

GLASGOW COMPLAINS THAT PERTH EXACTS  
ILLEGAL CUSTOMS AT ITS MARKETS.

In 1657 at the Conuention of Royal Burghs held in Glasgow, Glasgow presented a supplication to the same to which was made answer— "Anent the supplicatione presentit to the Commissioneris be the magistratis of Glasgow complaining that the burgh of Pearth did extors thame in thair customes at the common mercatis, and especiallie in exacting of thame tuelve schillingis Scotis for each pack of goodis bocht within thair burgh and goeing out thair of under the notione of the maintenance of ane post maister within the samyne contrair to all equitie and reasone, the present Commissioners haveing considerit the samyne they have ordainit that the burgh of Pearth sall produce to the nixt particular Conuention thair richtis of postmaisterschipp to be sein and considered by thame and determined theirin by thame as accordis, or utherwise to desyst efter the dissolving of the said particular Conuention to exact any snch custome frome any merchand resorting thither under the pain of tuentie pundis *toties quoties*."

At a particular Convention held in Edinburgh in the December of above year it was agreed “In respect the burgh of Pearth did not appear or produce ‘thair richtis to ane postmaisterschip,’ as required by the 18th act of last general Convention, the Commissioners ratified that act discharging the exaction of 12s of ilk pack, and ordained the clerk to intimate the same to the burgh.”

At the meeting of Convention held in 1658 at Edinburgh the clerk reported that he had communicated to the burgh of Perth the third act of last particular Convention and the Commissioners discharged the burgh from exacting any such exorbitant custome heirefter under the pain of 40 lib.

**GLASGOW COMPLAINS AGAINST RENFREW FOR  
ADMITTING BURGESSES IMPROPERLY.**

The Convention held at Edinburgh in 1668 “Ordnained the burgh of Ramfrew to answer at next generall Convention the complaint of the burgh of Glasgow against them for admitting burgesses not resident in the burgh.”

**GLASGOW PROSECUTES BURGHS OF BARONY AND  
REGALITY.**

The minutes of the meeting of the Convention held in Glasgow in 1675, contain what follows— “The meeting, takeing to consideration that upon pretence of the late Act of Parliament, burghs of regalities and barronies invades upon many priviledges which are only compitent by the said Act of Parliament to royall burrowis, does therefor ordaine that the said Act of Parliament be advised and consulted with the ablest

lawyers, and in respect the burgh of Glasgow and other burghs intends to persew a declarator of their right befor the lords of session, founded upon the said Act of Parliament, it is therefor declaired that the expensses of pley (debate) which shall be hereafter debursed be them in persewance of the said declarator, shall be upon the common charges and expensses of the hail burrows, and ordains their agent to concurre with them in that affaire by the aduice of Edinburgh, Perth, Linlithgow, and some other burghs next adjacent, who hes hereby absolute pouer to determine the propper time when it is fitt to move in the said declarator ; and in case Glasgow doe contrara to their openion, then the burrows to be free of their expensses.

THE CONVENTION CALLED UPON TO CONSIDER  
THE LOW ESTATE OF GLASGOW.

At the meeting held in Edinburgh it 1675, it was “ Recommended that the petition given in by the Provost of Glasgow in relation to the condition of the burgh to be considered at the next general convention.”

GLASGOW CRAVES LIBERTY TO SELL PORTIONS OF  
ITS COMMON MOOR OWING TO CULPABLE MIS-  
MANAGEMENT OF ITS AFFAIRS.

In 1676 the Convention which sat at Edinburgh came to this finding — “ Anent the supplication of the burgh of Glasgow, craving authority to sell portions of their common mure for ‘improvement of their Comon Good and releef of the poore,’ the Convention approved of the sale of three pieces of land, one piece

Liddellis Boag and another the Kows Lair." (Is this Cowlairs of station fame?)

In 1702 the Convention which met at Edinburgh "Appointed a committee to visit the burgh of Glasgow and to report as to their Common Good, trade, and public works."

In 1691, John Anderson, provost of Glasgow, gave in to the Convention at Edinburgh a doleful supplication of a very interesting description. "Anent the supplication given in be John Anderson, provost of Glasgow, in name and behalf of that burgh, mentioning that when the toun of Glasgow, having of a considerable tyme bygane flourished in its trade and inhabitants, and payed a large share of the publick burdens dew and payable by the state of burrowes, trew it is that of late the said burgh is become altogether incapable of subsistance, in regaird of these heavie burdens that lye thairvpon, occasioned by the vast sounes that have bein borrowed by the late magistrats, and the misapplying and dilapidation of the touns patrimony in suffering ther debts to swell, and employing the common stock for ther oun sinistrous ends and uses, wherein if the petitioner should be expres in the particular, it wold exceedingly tend to the dishonor and disparadge-ment of these whose dewty it wes to have bein the patriots and supporters of the place, bot without any designe to reflect or expatiat vpon ther misdemeaners, the petitioner humbly represents that ther wes ane absolut and indispen- sible necessity for the prasant magistrats to sell and dispose of a great pairt of ther patrimonie, especially the lands and barronie of Provan,

towards defraying of their most vrgent and pressing debts, without doeing therof they cannot propose any personall security to the touns creditors, nor will ther be any persons found to represent the toun in the office of magistracie till they be secured from legall dilligence, which can only be done by disposing of their patrimonie to a present sale ; and therfor desyring the Convention to interpose their authority, and grant warrand to the present magistrats and Council of G'lasgow to sell and dispon their saids lands or few duties as belong to them, to be imployed for payment of the forsaid debts, as the supplication bears ; which being considered by the Convention, they heirby interpose their authority, and grants warrand to the present magistrats and Council of Glasgow to sell and dispon their saids lands of Provan, to be imployed for payment of the debts owing be the said burgh of Glasgow."

The Convention which met at Edinburgh in 1702, appointed a committee to visit the burgh of Glasgow, and to report as to their Common Good, trade, and public works, which would lead one to the conclusion that the pecuniary condition of Glasgow was not improving.

**PATRIMONY AND COMMON GOOD OF THE BURGH  
OF GLASGOW, AND CHARGES THEREON.**

Glasgow the sixth day of May jm. vjc. nyntie two years compeired befor James Fletcher, provost of Dundie, and Alexander Walker, baillie of Aberdeen, commissionars appointed be the royall burrowes for visiting the wholl burghs royall be south and west the river Forth, the present magistrats and toun clerk of the burgh

of Glasgow, who gave in ane accompt of thair patrimonie and comon good, together with ane answer to the saids visitors instructions as follows :—

1mo. As to the first article, it is answered that ther comon good will amount to, *communibus annis*, to the soum of sixteen thousand nyne hundreth and two pounds Scots, which is expended as in the 10th article and conform to a particular accompt given in by the saids magistrats, and that ther debts extends to ane hundreth and seaventy eight thousand eight hundreth pounds Scots principall and annual rents.

2do. As to the second article, it is answered that they have no mortificationes but what hath been mortified for the maintenance of poor people and children, and that the towne is nothing eased therby.

3tio. As to the third article, it is answered that they are not concerned therein.

4. As to the fourth article, its answered that they are not concerned therein having a port of ther owne.

5. As to the fifth article, it is answered that they have produced ther thesaurers compt books for fyve preceeding years, which the saides visitors have at length considered, and that the ballance for the said fyve yearss makes them supperexpended in the soume of fourteen hundreth threttie four pounds six shillinges seaven pennies, and that ther equies with clerks and other dewes extends to ane hundreth and fyfty pounds Scots monie or therby, which is annually payed and mentioned in the accompt given in by themselves.

6. As to the sixt article, it is answered that ther forraigne trade of export and import, according to the exactest calculatiōne they can make, amounts yearly to the value of two hundred and fyve thousand pounds Scots monie or therby, and that they cannot condescend upon any retailing inland trade they have by ther ships, the most pairt therof being included in the export and import as aforesaid; and that they vent and retail about twenty tunns of French wine, twenty butts of seck, and about ten or twelve butts of brandy or therby yearly, but the consumption of ther wines is still less or more according as ther price is high or low, and that they vent and consume about a thousand bolls of malt monethly.

7. As to the seaventh article, its answered that they have fyfteen ships, whereof there are eight lyeing in ther harbour and seaven abroad and eight lighters, whose burthen, value, how and by whom employed, is at length contained in a peaper apairt given be the saids magistrats to the saides visitors, and have no other ships, barks, boats or ferrie boats belonging to them.

8. As to the eight article, it is answered that they are owners and partners of four ships belonging to unfree burghs, whose burthen, value, how employed, is at length contained in the above mentioned peaper given in by themselves, and ther trade with unfree burghs is condescended upon in the same.

9. As to the ninth article, it is answered that ther cess is payed by a tax on ther inhabitants.

10. As to the tenth article it is answered that the ministers, schoolmasters, and all other ther



publict servants, are mantainit and payed out of ther comon good, which is at length containit in a peaper apairt given in, including also ther Comon good as in answer to the first article.

11. As to the eleaventh article, it is answered that all the publict works are supported and maintained out of the Comon good.

12. As to the twelth article, it is answered that by the decay of trade a great number and many of the best of the houses are waste, yea that ther is near fyve hundreth houses standing waste and that those inhabited are fallen near a third pairt of the rent payed formerly, and that the best and worst will be betuixt ane hundreth pounds (whereof they have not eight inhabited by burgers) and four pounds Scots yearly, except some large taverns.

13. As to the treteenth article, it is answered that they have one yearly fair of fyve or six days continwance and three yearly marcats each of one dayes continwance, and a weekly, and that the toun hath no benefit by them.

14. As to the fourteen article, it is answered that they have the burghs of regalitie and barronie followeing, viz., Hamiltoune, a considerable distance from the sea and soe hath no forraigne trade but a great inland, and most pairt therof from Borrowstouness, and is in a flourishing conditione ; item, Paisley hes a great inland trade and is in a very flourishing conditione ; item, Greenock hes a very great trade, both forraigne and inland, and particularlie prejudiciall to the trade of Glasgow and other places on the river Clyde by buying portage from skippers and sailors to the value of the tenth pairt of the

loadening, and for better effectwating therof they stock the samen out with comodities and goes half profit with them ; item, Craufurdsdyk belonging to Craufurd of Crausfurdsburne and his sone, two burgers and inhabitants of Glasgow—it hath some trade in furnishing seamen with meat and drink. And that all these burghs are highly prejudiciall to ther trade, a mor particular accompt wherof they shall represent by ther Commissioner to the nixt Convention of burrows.

This is the trew accompt of the patromonie and Comon good of the said burgh of Glasgow, together with the answer to the saids visitors instructions, as it is given up by the saids magistrats under subscriyveing, who having used their best endeavours by conveening befor them seweralls of ther tradeing merchants best known in the trade of the place, as also they have perused ther Councill bookes and theasaurers accompt stated therinfor severall yeirs bypast, which they have produced to the saids visitors instructions is the neirest and trewist informatione they could reseave and give of the state of the said burgh, as also ther toun clerk hes subscribed the same in soe far only as concerns the Comon good, debts, and debursements. Witness all subscriptions to ther presents, place and day forsaid, *sic subscribitur* :—James Peadie, provest ; Wm. Cuming, baillie ; Simone Tennen, baillie ; G. Andersone, clerk.

The toun of Glasgow for its yearly expence :—

DEBITOR.

To the stipends of 5 of ther ordinary ministers,			
each being at 1080 libs yearly, is.....	5400	0	0
„ the stipend of the barronie minister.....	950	0	0

To the masters and two doctors of the gramer schooll ther sallary.....	593	6	8
„ the keeper of the touns cloacks yeirly.....	133	6	8
„ few duty paid to the Colledge of Glasgow yearly .....	166	13	4
„ the tack duty of the teynds of the barronie...	200	0	0
„ the sallary of the precentors of the 4 churches	320	0	0
„ the sallary of the keeper of the high Church..	133	6	8
„ the few duty paid out of the aikers of the new greences.....	66	13	4
„ the touns quarter master his sallary.....	180	0	0
„ the tounes postmaster .....	120	0	0
„ the doctor, cutter of the ston gravell.....	66	13	4
„ James Porterfield, schoolmaster, of pension..	52	0	0
„ upholding of the Great Church and other churches .....	666	13	4
„ coall and candle furnished to the toun guard	800	0	0
„ the master of works compt about the publick works of the toun.....	4400	0	0
„ the touns chirurgeon for the poor.....	133	6	8
„ the toun drummers ther pension and cloaths..	100	0	0
„ the severall ringers of the touns bells.....	50	13	4
„ the servants and keepers of the tolbooth....	66	13	4
„ the magistrats, thesaurer, master of works, &c., ther yearly fiial.....	165	0	0
„ the clerks servants yearly.....	180	0	0
„ the officers ther cloaths and pensions.....	740	0	0
„ the touns agent at Edinburgh his sallarie....	100	0	0
„ the yearly news letters and gazetts.....	60	0	0
„ the touns eique and eique of Provand.....	180	0	0
	15.994	6	8

The toun of Glasgow creditor by ther wholl

Comon good :—

By the duty of their milns value done year with another yeirly.....	5335	6	8
„ the duty of their ladles.....	2333	6	8
„ the duty of their pecks.....	566	13	4
„ the deuty of their tron.....	500	0	0
„ the deuty of ther bridge.....	733	6	8
„ the fourth part of the Gorbball teynds.....	200	0	0
„ ther walk milne.....			
„ the drawn teynds about the toun.....	800	0	0
„ the rent of the barronie of Provand.....	3333	6	8
„ their 4th part of ther Gorbball lands.....	666	13	4

By sewerall small ground anwalls.....	409	0	0
„ their miln lands.....	133	6	8
„ the rent of Petershill.....	63	13	4
„ their comon lands.....	72	0	0
„ their two greens yearly.....	1000	0	0
„ the flesh marcat.....	200	0	0
„ the royall companies house free.....	180	0	0
„ the correction house and yeard.....	50	0	0
„ burges fynes yeirly one year with another..	333	6	8
	<hr/>		
	16,902	0	0

There are lykwayes some houses and sallaries at Port-Glasgow, but by reason of the great decay of trade there is nothing gott for them—yea not soe much as it costs the toun in upholding them. The forsaid expence is by and attour the many annual rents they are obleidged to pay yearly for the vast sowmes they are in dew, as lyckways over and aboue their cesses and missiue dewes of the burrowes, as also the support of the government; all which, with the contingent charges of pleyes and debats of law, amounts to a very great expence under which this poor place cannot subsist. *Sic subscribitur*: —James Peadie, provest; G. Andersone, clerk.

Accompt. of ships belonging to the toune of Glasgow for the present shews

	Burden.	Value.
The James; Alexander Stewart, commander.....	100 tunns	5000 merks.
Elizabeth; John Millar, master.	150 „	6000 lib.
Friendship; Arch. Yuill, master.	80 „	4000 merks.
Lark; Robert Galbraith, master	80 „	6000 lib.
Grissell; John Taillyer, master..	30 „	2000 merks.
Amity; Lott Gordon, master....	80 „	6000 lib.
James; now bought be George Lockhart.....	160 „	6000 lib.
Fortoun; Hugh Campbell, lait master.....	50 „	2000 lib.

There are about eight lighters belonging to the

toun, keept for the most part by the merchants for their own use and careing coalls, wherof otherways they have no profit.

Accompt. of shipps belonging to the toun of Glasgow for present abroad and are uncertain of ther home comeing because of the warr, and the owners declair they are content to take ther stocks imployed in the voyadges :—

The Concord, Geo. Lyon, master	150 tunns	5000 lib.
James of Glasgow, Jas. Wilson, master.....	80 „	1890 „
The James.....	36 „	1000 „
The William and Marie, belong- ing to George Lockhart and partners.....	36 „	1000 „
The Margaret, belonging to Jas. Walkinshaw and partners...	50 „	1400 „
The Robert to Hugh Mont- gomerie.....	70 „	2000 „
The small yaught to James Gibsone.....	30 „	1000 „

Accompt. of some ships wherof some of the merchants of Glasgow have parts as follows :—

William Marshall, merchant in Glasgow, is a sixteen part owner of a ship of the burden of 150 tunns ; Robert Williamsone, master, and freeman in the toun of Linlithgow.

John Leckie, merchant, is a twelfth part owner of a ship of the burden of 150 tunns, being 28 years old ; Edward Hodge, master, and freeman in Linlithgow.

George Hendersone, John Robertsone, and Peter Napier, each of them are sixteen parts owners of a ship of 200 tunns ; James Robiesone, master.

The John of Greenock, burden 130 tunns or thereby, valued at 8000 marks ; the half wherof was laitlie bought by two merchants in Glasgow

at ane roup, but they hearing of the lait act of the royall burrows dischairgeing ther haveing any partnership with unfreemen in shiping they stopt to be any farder concerned therein.

As to trade with unfreemen or unfree burghs there is ordinarily bought of the herrings exported by the merchants of Glasgow aboue two hunder lasts frome Greenock men ; as also the far greatest pairt of Hollands comodities brought to this toune from skippers, seamen, and others liveing at Borrowstouness, and other places upon that coast. *Sic subscribitur* :— James Peadie, G. Andersone, clerk.

In 1729 affairs seem to have gone from bad to worse with Glasgow, for before the Convention held that year in Edinburgh it was reported by “the Committee appointed by the 6th act that it would tend to the benefit of the burgh of Glasgow, if the Convention authorises the Town Council to feu the lands and barony of Provand or any part of their commonty to the best advantage ; “the state of the trade of that burgh having of late appeared to be in a languishing condition.” A Committee was appointed at that meeting to visit the burgh and report as to its trade and common good.”

#### IMPRISONMENT OF WILLIAM ANDERSON, PROVOST OF GLASGOW.

The following is of general interest as shewing forth the risks which the old time Provosts ran in the discharge of their duty :—

“The Convention (assembled in Edinburgh, 6th July, 1688) having considered the petition given in be William Anderson, son to William

Anderson, late Provost of Glasgow, bearing that in anno Jm vjc and seventy-fyve ther being ane letter sent to the late Kings Majestie which gave offence at that tyme, the supplicant's father amongst some others of the burrowes wes fyned in sex thousand merks and wes imprisoned till he payed the same, and thes act being ane publict deed of the Convention, therefore craveand the Convention to take the supplicant's lose to consideration and appoynt some of ther number to consider the premisses and make report to the nixt generall Convention, as the petition bears ; which being considered be the Convention they doe recommend to the Commissioners for Edinburgh, Air, Stirling, St Andrews, Linlithgow, Haddingtoun, Rutherglen, and Rhenfrew, or any four of them, to repair to the said burgh and take tryall of the premises and to report to the nixt generall Convention."

At the 1689 Convention that matter formed the 22d item on a programme of business concerning "Greivances of the burghs," and ran to this effect, "That some redress be sought of the lait fynes imposed vpon Provost Petrie of Aberdeen, Provost Anderson of Glasgow, and Provost Ainsty of Jedburgh, who suffered fyning and imprisonment as acting dewtifullie as members of the Convention of burrowes in 1675."

At the Convention held at Dundee, 1692, the following deliverance was given:—"Anent the supplication given in be William Anderson, son to the deceist William Anderson, lait provost of Glasgow, craving that the sex thousand merks which he had payed to the publict for a fyne as being accessorie to the sending of ane letter to

King Charles the second from the burrowes in the year seventy four, and craving seing the same was a publict concern of the royall burrowes, that the said fyne should be casten proportionally vpon the burghs and payed to him ; the which supplication being at lenth heard, considered and debaited, amongst them, and it being publictly declared befor the Convention by the Commissioners of Aberdeen and Jedburgh that ther burghs had payed ther Commissioners who wer imprisoned and fyned vpon the same accompt, and that the tryall borrowes ought to be free therof, the Convention declares that they are nowayes lyable to pay any pairt of the said debt bot wes of the opinion that the samen ought to be paid by the toun of Glasgow, the petioners father being Commissionar for that burgh, and acted at the Convention as such, and that his actings ther wes approven by ane act of the toun of Glasgow. For these reasons the Convention recomends the petitioner to the toun of Glasgow for payment of the said fyne and ordans the clerk of Glasgow to give him ane extract of the said act out of the toun councill books of Glasgow.”

#### GLASGOW IN CONTROVERSY WITH GREENOCK.

The minutes of the meeting of the Commissioners of royal burghs held at Edinburgh in 1679 contain this item—“The town of Greenock having submitted all differences between them and the burgh of Glasgow to the Convention, they appointed the Commissioners for Edinburgh, Perth, Linlithgow, Air, Aberdeen, Stirling,



Haddingtoun, and Lanark, or any four of them, to meet at Glasgow on the second Tuesday of March next to settle the differences as in justice they should see fit."

The records of date 1692 of the business transacted at the Convention held in Dundee include this minute:—"Anent the petition given in be Sir John Schaw, younger of Greenock, mentioning that wher ane Comittie of the Convention of the royall borrowes at Candlemass jm. vjc. and nynty one, having vnder ther view the late act of parliament in ther favores, did wryt to the lords and gentlemen whoe were masters of the burghs of barronies and regalities, desyring them to come or send persons instructed to them for making proposalls in order to the communication of trade, the petitionar vpon receipt of his letter with others did come and wait vpon the Comittie and ther made the offer efter mentioned which was rejected by a single vot in that Comittie consisting of sex. In July thereafter, the Convention of burghs having mett the petitionar made application to be heard vpon the justice and reasonableness of his offer, which being allowed by the borrowes he resumed his offer for his toune, viz., that it should pay a proportionable pairt of the burden imposed vpon the royall borrowes by act of parliament effeir—and to the trade of his toune, he alwayes having a vote with the borrowes in making vp the stent roll, and for that effect the said petitionar desyred that the Convention might take the same way of tryall of the burghs royall. It being asked at Greenock how his offer could be made effectuall if the borrowes wer willing to accept

therof, to which Greenock answered that he would ingadge himself for the burden put vpon his toune and to make the offer effectuall, the borrowes royall allowing him to suit execution of the lait act of parliament made in ther favors in ther names against such of the inhabitants of his toune as did trade and wold not pay their proportion of the stent to be imposed vpon them for the relief of the royall borrowes for which he wes to vndertake. Upon this offer the royall borrowes were pleased to appoynt ane Comittie to meet with the said petitionar, John Anderson of Dowhill being one, and vpon the report of the Comittie Greenock's offer being soe reasonable the Convention did allow to him ane liberty of trade for his toune till the next Convention of borrowes, yet, notwithstanding of the forsaid offer and the borrowes liberty to Greenock in February last, the toune of Glasgow did applye to ane Comitty of the borrowes then sitting at Ediaburgh for a warrand to secure some herrings that were to be exported by the tounsmen of Greenock and since hes caused sumond threttie or fourtie of Greenock's men at the dean of gilds instance befor the comissars of Glasgow, In respect that Greenock is still willing to adhere to the aforsaid offer and to give his security for what proportion of the burden shall be put vpon his toune as aforsaid, and therfor craveand the Convention to take the premisses to ther consideration, receave the offer made by the said petitionar, appoynt two of ther number to consider the trade of Greenock that they may report to the Conventione thereanent, and give such a repremand to

the toune of Glasgow that in tyme coming they may know themselves to be subject (to) and not above the general convention of the royall borrowes ; and the said petitionar shall ever pray. (*sic subscribitur* :) John Sehaw. As the petition bears. Which being considered be the Convention they appoynt the Commissioners for the burghs of Perth and Stirling to visit the burgh of Greenock as to ther trade, whoe are to report against the nixt generall Convention, at which tyme they will take the vther poynts debaited at this Convention to ther consideration, and in the interim discharges the toune of Glasgow, the agent, or any other burgh, to trouble the toune of Greenock for ther trade or to put the lait act of parliament in favours of the royal burrowes to execution against the inhabitants of Greenock, declaring all the dilligencess alreadie used against them by Glasgow or any other royall burgh to be voyd and null ; provyding alwayes that the said laird of Greenock be bound and obleidged to make payment to the royall burghs of what pröportion of the taxt roll he shall be stented in efter the said report, and that the said taxt commencing from the dait of thir presents ; declaring that the said laird of Greenock shall have his relief of the said tax swa to be made from the inhabitants of Greenock, and for that effect impowers the agent to concur with him in obtaining his releife from all importers and exporters of goods within the said burgh, not excepting portage. Against the granting of which act in favores of Greenock the Commissionar for Glasgow protested and took instruments, as lykwayes the Commissioners for

Edinburgh and Stirling disassented against the premisses in favores of Greenock."

At the Convention held in Perth in 1697, the immediately following deliverance was given anent this quarell, viz., "The Conventione haveing considered the representatione given in by Sir John Shaw of Greenock, they declair that the said Sir John cannot be allowed to vote in this or any other meeting of the royall borrowes, but in regaird he now bears a proportione of the taxt roll as being a heritor of ane burgh of barronie, and that he has assisted the royall borrowes seuerall tymes for makeing the proportione led on the burghs of barronies and regalities effectuall, as has been publictly acknowledged by Mr John Buchan, ther agent and tacksman, therefor and for certain other considerationes the Convention allows the said Sir John to be present at this or any other meeting of the royall burrowes heirafter, and there to give informatione and advyce anent the trade of the burghs as weel royall as others ; as also they recomend to Mr John Buchan, ther tacksman, to deal descreetly and favourably with the said Sir John anent his proportion of the taxt roll, and farder recomends to the members of the Comitty that are to sit at Edinburgh to endeavour ane accomodatione betuixt the toun of Glasgow and the said Sir John, and in caise they doe not prevail, to report to the nixt generall Conventione, declaireing heirby that this favour shall not be a leading caise or a preparative to any other without the Conventions allowance."

To judge by the foregoing the old hard and

fast lines which bound as with bands of iron all burghs other than royal, were evidently beginning to give way, before the pressure of new and enterprising communities (such as that of Greenock). A new era of freedom had now begun to dawn upon them which broadened more and more through the revolving years unto the almost perfect day of the Reform Bill of 1832, before whose effulgence most of the dark hosts of antiquated selfish enactments fled away and found no longer place within the borders of the land.

Even the royal burghs with all their much cherished privileges did not continuously flourish in the times under our consideration, as witness the minutes of several Conventions of Royal Burghs held in various places which bear that remark out.

#### DECAY OF TRADE IN GLASGOW.

“The Convention, having considered the petition given in be the burgh of Glasgow holding furth in what flourishing condition they wer formerly in, and now what condition they are reduced to, by reason of the great addition of burden imposed upon them within this few years, which maks ther burden to be ane thousand two hundred and fifty pound sterling yearly or therby, and that these severall years bygane ther trade has been sadly decaying and is now come to be very inconsiderable, which was sufficiently known to the fermours (farmers) of his Maiesties Customes, and that the decay of ther fishing was ane universall discouragement to the inhabitants, and therefor craving the Convention to appoynt

three or four of their number to repair to their burgh and to take inquerie of their conditione, the Convention grants the desyre to the petition and appoynts the Commissioners for Edinburgh, Air, Stirling, St Andrews, Linlithgow, Haddingtoun, Rutherglen, and Rhenfraw, or any four of them, to repair to the said burgh and take tryall of the premises and to report to the next generall Convention." At the same gathering several other burghs requested the Convention to send some of their number to look into and report upon their sad condition amongst the number of which were Ayr and Rutherglen, whose Commissioners were component parts of the deputation which had been appointed to visit Glasgow their near neighbour, and point out to it a way of escape from its difficulties. The burgh has evidently at this period been a growing, if not a thriving, one, and year by year the waters of the Clyde, beloved of the salmon tribe, were getting more and more polluted to the disgust of those clean feeding, clean living fish, who betook themselves to more pellucid streams to the great loss of the Glasgwegians, who by their conduct had sown the wind and were now reaping the whirlwind.

GLASGOW LAMENTS TO THE CONVENTION CONCERNING MANY THINGS.

"The samyn day, anent the supplicatioun given in before thame be the present Commissioneris of the brugh of Glasgow lamenting the estait perrel and dainger of thair brig, the sanding of thair water, and the destruction of their grein for want of calsayis and brigis, to the

appearand decay of thair citie, and thairfoir desyring licence to purches and impetrat ane ressonable impost for reparatioun thairof, the saidis Commissionars of burrowis being awysit thairwith granttis and gewis licence to the said brugh to purches and impretat at our souerane lord ane gift for vplifting and ressaueing of the impost following, that is to say, for ilk ladenit hors with laid or drawchts passand alangis the said brig, of vnfremen and travelleris iij. d. ; of ilk thousand grene hering loissit and sauld within thair fredome, of the vnfremen inbringris thairoff foure penneis, and of fremen tua penneis ; ilk hogheid packit hering tuelf penneis ; ilk tun wyne loissit of vnfremen thre s, iij. d. ; ilk boitt cumand of thair watter with tymer stuigis (posts or stakes) and buirds of vnfremen x. d. ; ilk boitt of keling (large cod) of ten doissin, of vnfremen ane keling ; ilk laid wittuall coft in the toun and passing doun the water, of vnfremen sax penneis ; and that for the space of nyne yeiris nixt following the passing of the said gift, anent the impost of vnfremen, and for the space of thre yeiris concerning the impost of hering of fremen alanerlie : and at the end of the saidis yeiris compt to be maid to the saidis burrowis of the ressait and imployment of the saidis soumeis, with prouisioun that it sall nocht be lesum to thame to vplift the said impost efter the ische of the said yeiris without special consent of the burrowis, under the pane of ane vnlaw of xl li., and the Commissionaris of Renfrew disasented heirto anent the impost to be tane of fremen."

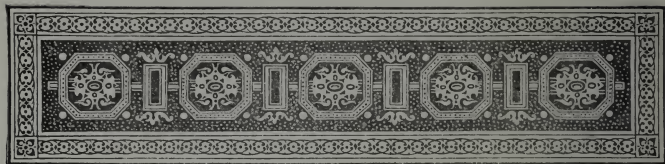
By means of this impost the now "second city" was in some measure enabled to jog along.

**GLASGOW AND AYR REFUSE TO PAY PART OF THE EXPENSES OF COMMISSIONERS TO ENGLAND.**

At the Convention of Royal Burghs, held in Perth on 10th July, 1692, “George Cocheran, Commissioner for the brugh of Air, and James Forret, Commissioner for the brugh of Glasgow, for themselfiss and in name of their saidis burghis, dissassentit to the payment of thair pairt of the soum of xvjm. merkis grantit be the burrowis for defraying of the chairgis of the foure Commissioneris of burrowis and three laweris appointit to pass to Ingland in Commission for the mater of the Vnion, aleging thai haid na Commissioun of thair said brughis to grant ony taxatioun, in respect thair was nane of the burrowis in the West country nominat in the said Commissioun of Ingland, and thairvpon askit instrumentis.”







## Section III.

### MISCELLANEOUS EXCERPTS FROM RECORDS OF DATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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#### GLASGOW INSUPPORTABLY BURDENED.

At Edinburgh, 8th July, 1706, "The Convention having considered petition by Glasgow" representing the great and unsupportable burdens, and finding that the missive dues this year have risen extremely by the advance of money for outrigging the ship called the Royal William, they recommended to the next general Convention that the case of that burgh should have first place in their consideration."

At the same place next year the matter was taken up, with this result—"Anent petition by the burgh of Glasgow, showing their bad circumstances, with their great loss they have lately sustained in their shipping, the Convention appointed their agent to pay the burgh 2000 merks Scots of present supply, and the condition of the burgh to be a head of next general missive."

The 1708 meeting, which was also held in the capital, “On a petition from the burgh of Glasgow, the Convention appointed the agent to pay to the burgh 1000 merks Scots of gratuity, and that out of respect the present Convention have to Robert Rodger, ther present provest and Commissioner.”

GLASGOW RESISTS AN INCREASE OF TAXATION  
IN 1711.

“ Followes the reasons given in be John Aird, Commissioner for Glasgow, why the toun of Glasgow ought not to be charged higher in their proportion of the cess :—

(1) It is to be considered that the toun of Glasgow has no courts of judicature to occasione the resort of strangers, numbers of inhabitants, consumptione of goods, and other advantages by which cities are supported in their riches and trade, but the said toun depends almost entirely upon the trade to the plantations, which how uncertain and precarus it is in time of war everybody knows, and how particularly it has been so to Glasgow cannot escape the observacione of all who have been anywise acquainted with that place since the Union.

(2) The losses of that toun by trade have been so palpable and so considerable that it can to a demonstration be made appear, upon a reasonable estimat of the incomes and [losses] by trade, that the latter has exceeded the former above thirty thousand pounds sterling the three years last past.

(3) It is well known to many of the Conventione that when the tax roll was altered

about six years agoe the toun of Glasgow was advanced four pounds sixteen shilling in their proportion of the said roll, for no other reasone, as we presume, then because the said toun had appeared in a necessary prosicutione of their just right and title to their proportion of the burrow tack, by which they undeservedly fell under the resentment of some of the then members of the Conventione that exerted themselves to contrive and lay upon the said toun such ane unsupportable burden under which they have ever since groaned, and the last year when the tax roll came to be altered the Convention were so sensible of this heavy burden of the toun of Glasgow and of the vast losses which it had sustained and were then recent, that they appeared very well disposed to have eased us of some part of our proportione of the tax roll, but the Commissioner and assessor of said toun were desired, not to push any alteratione that time in regard of the instability of the times and of the probable expectatione of a peace, and to prevent the heats and animosities which upon the change of the roll might arise, which the said Commissioner and Assessor from a view to the amity and peace of the burrows and a confidence of their compassion to the said toun complied with.

(4) Not only upon these considerations had the toun of Glasgow ground to expect ane ease of their burden from this Conventione, but likewise upon account of the great lose they have mett with this year, the lose of four of their West India ships within these few days, the too just fears of the lose of more of them, that they were under no apprehensions of having any further

burden laid upon them, much less could they have expected that the Conventione should have proceeded in such ane irregular and precipitant method, and imposed a scheme without consulting the toun of Glasgow and the other burghs so much concerned.

(5) Not only have the toun of Glasgow these losses, but this and the two former years have been extraordinary, but even the ships which have arrived and are so much talked of have been for the most part loaden with tobacco, which commoditie since the Union has been so great a drugg that it rather has brought loss then profite to the importers. As for red wine and other goods, by which any advantage has accresced to the merchant, our importatione of them have been so very inconsiderable that they can never be a reasone for laying on a greater burden.

(6) A great deal of forreign trade, and almost all the fishing of the west seas, reputed to be in the toun of Glasgow, has been and is managed by the toun of Greenock and other places, not to mentione the removall of severall of our chief merchants from Glasgow to other places, where they can be easier in their stent, and the vast charge and expence which the toun of Glasgow in now obliged to be at in repairing and cleansing of their harbour at Port-Glasgow to prevent their ships beeing obliged to go to other ports.

From all these reasons, and a great many others which might be offered, it is evident that the not lessening the toun of Glasgow's proportione of the tax roll, much more the charging them with any more then according to their proportione of the defeciency of the unfree traders,

must inevitably bring ruine and desolation upon that toun ; as the saids reasons signed be the said John Aird bears."

To this appeal the Convention, after several sittings, gave an unfavourable answer, so that Glasgow had to be content to bear the additional burden imposed upon it.

THE FORMATION OF A NEW BRITISH FISHERY  
COMPANY TO BE OPPOSED.

At Edinburgh in 1720, "The Convention upon report of the committee appointed to consider the representation of the dean of gild and merchants of Glasgow, for themselves and for thousands, concerned in making, curing and exporting of fish made in the west seas of Scotland, seting forth that there is a design set on foot by some persons for carying on a grand fisherie in Britain, particulary in the northern parts thereof, and for promoting whereof there are subscriptions taken in for a very considerable sum and application is to be made for letters patent erecting and establishing them into a royal or grand fisherie company, exclusive of all others, for making, curing and exporting of fish, which cannot but be hurtfull to the whole body of the nation ; which being considered by the Convention, together with a minute of committee of burrows, dated 11th December, 1718, by which Mr William Hamilton, agent for the royal burrows at London, is directed to procure a copy of any petition that shall be presented to the Privy Council of Britain for procuring a patent of this kind, and to transmitt the same to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. And the Convention having

heard *viva voce* the Commissioners of the severall royal burrows concerned in the fishing trade upon the subject of the said representation, did therefor appoint Mr William Hamilton their agent at London, to take nottice of any application that shall be made in favours of the said Company, and if any exclusive clauses be desided in the said patent of the libertie of the subjects of Scotland now enjoying the fishing trade, and appointed him in name of the burrows to oppose the same and to correspond with the Committee of burrows for their further directions if the same should be found necessary with respect to his conduct in the matter and to report his dilligence to the said Committie; and the Convention recomended to the Commissioners of the severall royal burrows to the parliament to assist the agent therein.

**ATTEMPT TO DEPRIVE SCOTLAND OF ITS TOBACCO TRADE.**

At Edinburgh 10th January, 1723, was held a committee meeting at which "The Lord Provost of Edinburgh (preses) acquainted the Committee that he had received a letter from the Magistrats of Glasgow dated the twenty sixth of December last signifying that the merchants of London, Bristoll, and other touns in England, were making attempts to deprive our country of the tobacco trade, therefor desiring the Committee might be called to meet this day for using their endeavours to prevent such attempts upon so valuable a branch of trade; which being read, together with a missive from the Lord Provost to the members of the Committee for their

meeting accordingly, they remitted to the Commissioners from the burghs of Edinburgh, Stirling, Glasgow, Kirkaldie, Renfrew, Sanquhar, Inverarie, and Campbeltown, as a sub-committee to consider the subject of the said letter and every other thing remitted to the Committee by the Convention of the royal burrows in July last and to report."

11th January, 1723.—The sub-committee [submitted the following draught petition to parliament and reasons in support of the same ; and the Committee approved thereof and directed the petition to be transmitted to the members of parliament representing the burghs for their concurrence :—]

“To the honourable the Commissioners of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, the humble petition of the royal burrows of Scotland sheweth—That the frauds committed in the trade of tobacco being presently under your consideration, papers have been handed about among your members charging the Scots merchants solely with these frauds, and boldly asserting that the English merchants have found a great decay in the consumption and sale of their tobaccos imported into England, from the vast quantities of tobaccos imported into Scotland, and from thence brought to several parts of England, and sold at lower prices than the Crown ought to receive for the customes upon the said commoditie if duly entered at importation, and pointing at a re-entry of all tobaccos that shall be brought from Scotland to England, or from England to Scotland, and confining the importation of all tobaccos from abroad to fixed



ports, as regulations for keeping that trade upon an equality betwixt England and Scotland, and for preventing frauds against the revenue.

“That the privilege, both of exportation and importation, for very valuable considerations by several Acts of Parliament before the Union, is vested in your petitioners.

“That, by the fourth Article of the Union, it is provided that all the subjects of the United Kingdom and the dominions and plantations thereto belonging, and by the twenty-first Article, our rights and privileges as they then were, are to remain intire after the Union, and notwithstanding thereof.

“That your petitioners, being thus interested in the foreign trade of Scotland, most humbly beg leave to represent that where frauds are committed in any branch of trade, does not only prejudice the revenue, but also must destroy fair traders ; that frauds in the foirsaid branch of trade may be committed both in England and Scotland is most certain, but we humbly presume that such regulations pointed at as aforesaid, will not prove effectual, and will put the merchants of Scotland under such great hardships as will inevitably disable them to carry on any part of the tobacco trade, which is the most valuable branch of trade left them.

“That your petitioners do heartily desire that the most effectual course be taken for discovering and punishing all frauds practised against the revenue in all time coming, at the same time most assuredly depending upon the great justice and wisdom of this house that their rights and privileges secured to them by the treaty of



union shall remain safe and intire, and that only such expedients may be used for securing the revenue as may leave the fair traders upon an equal footing, and so as the general intrest of trade and fair dealers may be neither ruined nor hurt for the crime and villany of a few smugglers.

“Wherefore we humbly pray that this honourable house will be pleased to order the frauds practised against the revenue as well in England as in Scotland, to be strictly and impartially enquired into, that those who are guilty be effectually punished, and that only such expedients may be used for securing the revenue against frauds as may be consistent with the rights of your petitioners and with the equality and general intrest of trade and fair traders.”

It is certain that the attempt to crush the tobacco trade of Scotland was futile, for the “tobacco lords” of Glasgow were for long the most flourishing of its citizens. In 1772, out of 90,000 hogsheds of tobacco imported into Great Britain, Glasgow alone imported 49,000.

By all accounts, says a *Glasgow Herald* of recent date, our Virginian trade was the making of Glasgow, and four young men—Alexander Spiers, John Glassford, William Cunninghame, and James Ritchie—were the making of our Virginia trade. It was a big thing to make. The American colonies, Maryland, Carolina, and above all Virginia, had the monopoly practically of the tobacco supply of Europe, and the mother country had the monopoly of the export trade of the colonies. Before the Union England had had this trade to herself. After the Union

Glasgow elbowed her way in, and pretty well elbowed Bristol and London out. When the trade collapsed with the American War over half of the whole American export was coming into the Clyde, nearly all for re-export to the Continent, to Ireland, and to England herself. Alexander Spiers was our biggest importer. He had a seventh of the whole Clyde import, a twelfth of the whole European import; and he managed, unlike many of our tobacco lords, to save what he had made, and to retire with a large fortune. He set himself to found a family, bought all the lands he could lay his hands on up and down Renfrewshire, and got the whole erected into a barony. He named his barony Elderslie, from the most historic of his purchases, the ancient heritage of Wallace of Elderslie, near Paisley. Elderslie House, the messuage of the barony, he built on another purchase near Renfrew, of which the proper name is King's Inch. Archibald Alexander Speirs, now Laird of Elderslie, is the founder's great-great-grandson.

ANENT ACCEPTING A COMMISSIONER FROM  
GLASGOW IN THE ANNUAL COMMITTEE.

14th December, 1725, John Stirling, late bailie in Glasgow, having given in his Commission, the Committee, before reading it, remitted to a committee "to search precedents how far it has been the custom of royal burrows to admit members of the Committee who were not contained in the commission to the last annual Convention."

On 16th December they "recommended the committee appointed by the second act to proceed in the affair, and report to next meeting."

On 17th December, the committee to whom the matter was referred, reported that they had examined the records for thirteen years past, and as a consequence “they were humbly of opinion that the Commission in favours of Mr Stirling should be received *pro hae vice*, but that for hereafter no such commission should be received to any meeting of ane annual committee, but that all the burrows should be represented thereto appointed by the general Convention; which being considered by the Committee, they approve thereof, and allows Bailie Stirling to sit as a member *pro hae vice*, but this not to be a precedent in time coming.”

**LAWSUIT AGAINST THE OFFICERS OF REGIMENTS  
QUARTERED IN GLASGOW.**

At a meeting held in Edinburgh in 1727, “the Committee, upon application made to them for the magistrats of Glasgow, appoint their agent to concurr with the said magistrats in a lawsuit now depending before the lords of session against the officers of the regiments quartered in the said burgh, anent the manner of quartering.”

**GLASGOW DISSENTS FROM THE TAX ROLL OF 1727.**

“The Committee (of that date) having maturely considered and examined the respective state and condition of every one of the royall burrowes were unanimously of opinion that the tax roll should be proportioned amongst the royall burrowes for what term of years the Convention should determine in manner following.” In the list Glasgow’s proportion appears at £21 10s as against Edinburgh’s £34 10s.

“The Convention approved of the Committee’s report, and appointed the Tax Roll as now proportioned to be the rule of payment of the cess and missive dues for two years until July 1730,” against which the Commissioner for Glasgow dissented and took instruments.

#### MEMORIAL FROM GLASGOW DISTILLERS.

11th July, 1730—“Remitted to the annual Committee to consider memorial from the distillers in Glasgow, and to advise with lawiers thereanent and doe everything propper for the effectuall prohibition of forreign spirits.”

The annual Committee of date 13th July same year “Appointed the agent to take advice as to the memorial by the distillers of Glasgow, and thereafter the Committee will commune with the Commissioners of Customs thereanent.”

The Convention of same year heard the draft read of an act for discouraging the running and consumpt of brandy and other forreign spirits, and ordered a thousand copies to be cast off and transmitted to every burrow, royal and otherwise. Many urgent reasons are given in the act why the same should be passed such as “that the common and excessive use of brandy which pays no duty, by hindering the manufacturing grain into bear, ale, and spirits, reduces greatly the publick revenues, and thereby narrows the funds out of which all bountys and allowances for exportation of fish and corn are payable and by the overpluses whereof the plan for promoting fisherys and manufactures in Scotland can alone be carried into execution.”

APPLICATION BY THE CORDINERS OF EDINBURGH  
AND GLASGOW.

At Edinburgh, 25th March, 1731—"Upon application from the Cordiners of Edinburgh and Glasgow shewing that there is a design to have a bill presented in parliament to disable all Cordiners from being tanners, which, if it should pass, would be a great detriment to the whole incorporations of Cordiners in royal burrows and is directly contrair to their seals of cause ratified in parliament, and therefore craving the Committee would give such directions therein as they should think proper," which being considered by the Committee they appoint a letter to be written to the representatives of the royal burrows in parliament to oppose the same; as also the bill depending in parliament for making the proceedings of courts of justice in English may extend to Scotland, and recommend to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, their preses, to sign the same, the tenor whereof follows:—

Sir,—The committee of the royal burrows being informed that a project is sett on foot to have a bill brought in to extend to Scotland ane act made in the parliament of England 1 James whereby all cordiners are disabled from being tanners, have ordered me to desire you in concert with their other representatives in parliament to oppose the same as being a manifest incroachment on the seals of causes granted to the cordiners of royal burrows which are ratified in parliament and secured to them by the twenty-first article of the treaty of union. Nor could this be of any benefit to the revenue nor would it tend to the meliorating of that manufacture.

Further, it must necessary highten the price of that commodity to ane extravagant rate for several years ; at least till there were so many tannerys set up as could answer the demands of the country, or the country must be served by importation. Mr William Hamilton is directed to waitt upon yow and if necessary to petition to be heard by Councill. The committee doe observe that a bill is depending for makeing all the proceedings of the courts of justice in English, etc. They wish heartily that it may reach Scotland and comprehend the Court of exchequer, chancery and all other offices, and all deeds, instruments and writeings ; and if it is yet practicable they desire it may be done. They directed me to make yow their complements and they doe depend on your exerting yourself in their particulars.—I am, (etc.)

#### THE WEAVERS OF GLASGOW COMPLAIN.

The general Convention of Royal Burghs, which met at Edinburgh in 1732, “ Remitted to the annual committee a representation from the Linnen Society at Glasgow.”

At the 1734 Convention “ There was presented to the Convention a representation for the weavers of Glasgow complaining of many incroachments made by the inhabitants of their suburbs upon the priviledges of the craftsmen in free burghs, and for making void contracts and agreements betwixt incorporations of craftsmen in free burghs and craftsmen in the suburbs thereof, and that at present there is a proces with that view depending before the lords at the instance of the weavers of Caldoun (Calton ?) and

Blackfold and John Orr of Barrowfield against the weavers of Glasgow which must affect the whole royal burrows and craveing that the Convention would appoint such a sum as they should think fitt for defraying the expens of the said proces which in its consequence must affect the whole craftsmen of royal burrows ; which being considered by the Convention they appoint their agent to concurr with the weavers of Glasgow in their said proces and to lay out a sum not exceeding twenty pounds sterling in defending thereof in case the same shall be necessary."

In 1735 the Convention "Authorized the agent to pay to the weavers of Glasgow, who had expended nearly £60 sterling on the faith of the 16th act of last general Convention, the sum of £20 allowed by that act."

THE KING TO BE SUPPLICATED FOR A GIFT OF  
IMPOST FOR KIRKINTILLOCH BRIDGE.

During the sitting of the same Convention, as the above resolution was approved of, the one which immediately follows was passed—"Granttis and gewis licence to the brugh of Glasgow to impetrat of our souerane lord the gift of the impost following, to be vpliftit be thame for reparatioun and vphald of the brig of Kirkintulloch, for the space of thre yeiris, viz. : of ilk laidinit hors, twa penneis ; of ilk futeman with ane burdein ane penny ; ilk hors, kow, or ox, ane penny ; of ilk ten scheip tua penneis ; vpon compt to be maid to the burrowis of the collectioun and employement according to the ordour in sic caisis, and the impost foirsaid, to be vpliftit at the brig foirsaid."



ANENT MAKING A HIGHWAY BETWEEN EDINBURGH  
AND GLASGOW.

On 30th December, 1736, "the committee having heard a memorial from severall of the merchants in the city of Edinburgh and Glasgow, in behalf of themselves and others dealing in forreign trade, setting forth the many advantages that would access to the whole kingdom and the trade and commerce thereof if the communication betwixt the Firth of Clyde and the Firth of Forth by land were made more commodious by making a highway in a direct line from Edinburgh to Glasgow, sufficient to bear the weight of all manner of wheel carriage, and that it would deserve to be forwarded and carried on from some publick fund, the committee delayed the consideration thereof till the fifteenth of February next, and appoint their agent to write to the hails members of the committee to attend at that time to consider the said memorial ; and also to consider of the proper clauses to be part of the bill depending in Parliament for maintaining and imploying the poor ; and of proper means to establish a fixed table of fees for the custom house officers as remitted by the fifteenth and twenty-third acts of last generall Convention."

Next year, 1737, the committee having again heard the memorial concerning the proposed road between Edinburgh and Glasgow, with the petition from Glasgow relative thereto, delayed farther consideration of the matter "until a survey be made of the ground and proper estimates of the expence be laid before the committee."

These necessary preliminaries having been duly



attended to, a highway was ere long made to connect the metropolitan city with its western rival. In this year of grac, 1896, there are the following additional connecting links between the two places, viz., Edinburgh and Glasgow, N.B. Railway and that of the Caledonian, and also that important waterway the Forth and Clyde Canal.

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### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

EMBRACING MATTERS RELATING TO GLASGOW SHIPPING, ANCIENT AND MODERN, AND ALSO ITS POPULATION, PAST AND PRESENT, AND EXPANSION OF TRADE.

Courteous reader ere we part company I would by way of shewing the mighty expansion of the trade of Glasgow of recent years give the number, tonnage, and value of vessels belonging to the city in 1692 in contrast to what obtained in 1895.

In the former year the burgesses of the place owned fifteen ships ranging in size from thirty to one hundred and sixty tons, and eight lighters principally used by the owners for private purposes such as carrying coals. In addition thereto some Glasgow merchants held shares in three vessels, two being of 150 and one of 200 tons burthen. The gross value of the whole fleet not taking into account the vessels only partly owned by Glasgow people nor their lighters was in Scots money £55,200 plus 11,000 merks, making in English money £5256 2s 3d.

By the kind offices of ex-Lord Provost John Ure I am enabled to give the following statistics

of the number, tonnage, and value of sailing and steamships hailing from the port of Glasgow prepared by Captain White, its obliging harbour master. Sailing ships on Glasgow register as at 31st December, 1895 :—Number, 571 ; gross tons, 604,501 ; nett tons, 572,568 ; value, £2,418,004. The value is taken at £4 per ton. Steam ships on Glasgow register as on 31st December, 1895 :—Number, 1099 ; gross tons, 1,548,481 ; nett tons, 952,758 ; value, £23,227,215. The value is taken at £15 per ton. The above contrast is calculated to make one assume the attitude of Dominic Sampson when he got excited and ejaculate his favourite phrase “*Prodigious.*” The progress indicated in the returns if equalled is possibly unexcelled in the annals of the ports of the world.

The above forms an accurate index to the growth of the city’s industrial activities as well as commercial enterprises, and its consequent rapid and continuous rise in the scale of the social communities of Great Britain. And to further emphasize the same I append a statement of the income of the Clyde Trust beginning at a period which may fitly be termed modern, namely, the era which had its rise shortly after the rebellion of 1745 had been crushed and left the present dynasty securely seated on the throne of the three kingdoms, thus inaugurating a new era of peace and prosperity.

From July, 1752, to July, 1770, the income of the then Clyde Trust was a little over £140, testifying abundantly that a few Highland wherries and a modicum of small coasting vessels and lighters were the alone contributors to the

fund. In 1796 the receipts had increased to within a few pounds of £4000, but they did not reach £5000 till 1807 ; by 1830 they had jumped up to £20,000, shewing the blessed result of the labours of James Watt and Henry Bell of steam engineering fame, conjoined with the efforts of J. Smeaton, John Gölborne, James Spreull, and the eminent civil engineers who in succession had charge of the river, and have now rendered it one of the marvels of the world. In 1840 the revenue was £46,536 ; by 1850 it had leaped to over £60,000, and by 1860 it had advanced to nearly £100,000. From that period the increase has been quite phenomenal. In 1876 close upon £200,000 had been reaped, and ten years later—1886—the total income was £281,912, the income having more than doubled in twenty years. The year ending June, 1896, shews the magnificent and suggestive revenue of £405,585, and still it is ascending. 960 sailing ships arrived in Glasgow Harbour during the 12 months ending 30th June, 1896, of 158,572 registered tons valued at £3 10s per ton, gives £555,002 for the sailing ships. 15,430 steamers arrived in Glasgow Harbour during the 12 months ending 30th June, 1896, of 3,789,910 registered tons valued at £10 10s per ton, gives £39,794,055 for the steamers. The estimated price per ton of above is lower than what is given for vessels registered at Glasgow, which included few or none of the “tramp” order, and are, therefore, as a rule of a higher class than the average.

Having drawn a contrast between what obtained in regard to shipping matters in far back times at the harbour of Glasgow and what

obtains now, to still further shew forth the growth of the city, I give a statement of its population in 1795 and a century later. In the former year it was estimated at 70,000, and at the latter period it had risen to the grand total of 817,000 souls—of a verity a most remarkable increase.

A very substantial expansion of the trade of the city and a consequent large advance in the numbers of its citizens took place when the “Virginia lords” withdrew from the very special and prominent position which they so haughtily held in the community, and left the field of operations, which they had so long cultivated, open to the enterprise of the wider circle of general merchants engaged in the steadily growing intercourse with the West Indian Colonies and foreign countries.

At this period Dr Strang says, “Business of all kinds became diffused among the citizens. The two great classes of society, into which the city had been so long divided, gradually disappeared. The merchant and the manufacturer were now seen amalgamating; while the strict social barrier, which so long separated the tradesman from the foreign trader, was henceforth swept away amid the daily intercourse of business men which, after 1781, had been taking place under the canopy of the public news-room at the Cross. Trade in fact was now regarded under a new and more universal phase; and society assumed a more cosmopolitan condition, under a happy amalgamation of all classes.”

The passing of the first and subsequent Reform Bills, which, among other things,

abolished many pestilent potentialities which adhered to municipal rulers, and which they not infrequently translated into acts for their own aggrandisement to the great hurt and detriment of the communities over which they were placed, accelerated the onward march of the city, as did also, but in a far greater degree, the application of the steam engine to the propelling of vessels, drawing of railway trains, and the thousand and one other occupations which the giant steam is given to do in the interests of humanity. These, culminating in the repeal of the obnoxious Corn Laws and the establishment of free trade, made Glasgow advance by leaps and bounds, till now, she stands in the proud position of being the second city in the empire, and the best regulated municipality in the world, according to the dictum of parties well qualified to give an opinion on the subject.

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## A P P E N D I X .

### MODE IN WHICH THE TOWN COUNCIL OF GLASGOW AND THE OTHER ROYAL BURGHS OF SCOTLAND WERE ELECTED, AND ITS CONSEQUENT EVILS.

In the foregoing concluding remarks, attention is drawn to the action of the old-time municipal authorities in such terms as are intended to lead my readers to think that their schemes were not invariably concocted with a view to the promotion of the common weal, but were not infrequently arranged to subserve their own private interests. The complaints made to the House

of Commons against these magnates, in 1793, by the royal burghs of Scotland, were referred to a select Committee of the House, whose report was published in 1819. The reading of the same to the average voter of this generation, who enjoys such large liberty in the choice of his representatives, will be somewhat of a surprise, and be hard to believe, but its truth is beyond question. The contemplation of the grievances under which the old-time communities laboured ought to call forth a feeling of thankfulness in our bosoms that we did not exist in those bad old times. To prove my contention, I proceed to quote from the report of the Committee to the House, which, in its opening part, runs on thus :—

“The (ultimately proven) allegations of the petitions referred to the Committee, may be divided under two general heads, viz. :—

“(1) Complaints against the system of internal government under which all the burghs, with scarcely any exception, are alleged to be managed ; and

“(2) The evils which necessarily result from such system, or are found practically to follow where such system obtains.

“This general view will, however, be better understood by stating, in a more detailed manner, the grievances of which the petitioners complain, and which appear to arrange themselves under the following heads :—

“1. The mode of election of the magistrates and Town Council, common to all the burghs in Scotland, under the Act of the Scots Parliament, 1469, c. 30, by which the old Council elects the

new, and the new and old together choose the magistrates. By this mode of election, the persons once obtaining a majority on the Council have it in their power to re-elect themselves, or to elect others in their interest, and thus to continue the controul and management of the affairs of the burgh in their own hands and in those of their adherents in perpetual succession.

“2. The want of a due representation of the several corporations of the burgh, namely, the guildry and trades (where such corporations exist), in the Council, arising from the mode in which the dean of guild, merchant Councillors, trade Councillors, and deacons of crafts, the nominal representatives of these corporations, are elected into that body.

“3. A want of controul in the burgesses, and in the corporations, over the expenditure of the revenues of the burgh, and over the contracting of debts, for which the community is rendered liable.

“4. A want of power in the burgesses and corporations to call upon the magistrates and Council to account for their management of the revenues and funds under their charge, and other culpable mismanagements.”

As far as the copier of this formidable indictment is aware no remedy was obtained from Parliament for these clamant wrongs until the 1832 Reform Bill after much battling was embodied in the statute book of the realm. Evil things die hard, but go they must before the advancing intelligence of the enlightened times which have succeeded the dark ages of misappropriation and mis-government.